

SIR WALTER RALEIGH



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"THE MEETING OF SIR JOHN GILBERT AND RALEIGH"—Page 69

SIR WALTER RALEIGH

BY
BEATRICE MARSHALL

*With Frontispiece in Color and Eight
Black-and-White Illustrations*



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One of the gallantest worthies that ever England bred

AUBREY

*God has made nobler heroes, but He never made a finer
gentleman than Sir Walter Raleigh* R. L. STEVENSON

CHAPTER I: *Boyhood*

THERE never was a time when so many great men lived in England as in the 'spacious times' of Queen Elizabeth. Our hearts thrill with pride when we read about those gallant men: those soldiers, seamen, and merchant-adventurers, great poets, play-writers, and scholars, of whom Shakespeare was the greatest of all.

It must have been a glorious time to live in, we think, that time when there were new worlds to discover, and when nearly every crew that set sail in their ships from British harbours went on a voyage of discovery, and reached unknown countries overseas and saw strange beasts and found wonderful treasures—gold nuggets, pearls and coral—which the sailors brought home with them to their humble native fishing villages.

Near one of these little villages on the red coast of Devon there stood (and it stands to-day) a pleasant farm-house with thatched gabled roof, and latticed diamond-paned windows on either side of a carved stone porch. A long sunny garden path, flagged with white stones and flanked with sunflowers, hollyhocks and tall white lilies, leads up to the oaken door with its big iron nails and massive knocker.

This house is Hayes Farm, near Budleigh-Salerton, famous as the birthplace of one of the most picturesque heroes of the Elizabethan period—Walter Raleigh, who was born there in the wainscotted chamber above the porch. The year of his birth is

Sir Walter Raleigh

not certain, but 1552 is generally accepted as the most probable date.

It was a small house for so large a family, for Raleigh's father, another Walter, had been married three times. His first wife, Joan Drake (a cousin of the great admiral), gave him two sons, John and George; his second wife, a daughter, Mary; and lastly, Katharine, widow of Sir Otho Gilbert of Compton Castle and mother of the brave explorer, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, brought him four sons, of whom Walter was the second, his brother Carew being two years older.

Love of the sea and everything belonging to it was born in his blood. His kinsmen were the Champernouns, Gilberts, Grenvilles and Carews, sea-faring names that will never die. His Champernoun cousins were, most of them, hardy sea-rovers, gentlemen of noble descent, who sailed their own ships, and searched for the North-west passage to Cathay, plundered Spanish galleons, and carried off cargoes of treasure and negroes.

Let us picture the young Raleigh, as an artist of our own day has painted him for us, a slender, long-legged boy in doublet and hose, with a small ruff tightly encircling the pointed oval of his dark handsome face. We see this boy riding to the Grammar School in a neighbouring town, through the freshness of the morning and between the high-banked Devonshire lanes, with a servant behind him carrying his books; we see him coming home in the afternoon and, after a hearty meal of spiced beer and slices from a crusty home-baked country loaf, spread with honey and clotted cream,

Boyhood

running off again as fast as his long legs would carry him, through Budleigh village, past the noble old parish church where he worshipped on Sundays, over lush, marshy meadows, never stopping till he came to the shelving white beach of Salterton and his first love, the blue, wide sea. What joy it was to sit on the beach among the lobster pots with his pointed chin resting on his knees, while the sailors mended their nets and talked of those far-away lands across the Atlantic and of the marvels that they had seen there. How eagerly the boy drank in tales of adventures by sea; of fights with the Spaniards and the capture of booty; of landing on foreign shores and making tracks through pathless virgin forests; of Red Indians and birds of gorgeous plumage, and of fierce Amazon women. Of these things were the stories related on Salterton beach by the sailors, who wore their hair in ringlets and in their ears gold earrings shaped like ships, and whose skin had been so scorched and withered by tropical suns that they were nearly as swarthy as the Indians themselves.

Like all boys in those days, Walter longed to go to sea, and Sir Francis Drake was his hero. But his ambitions were as numerous as his talents, and it was not on the sea that he began his career but at Oxford.

He was entered as a Commoner at Oriel College, Oxford, at the age of fourteen, and laid the foundation of that great love of learning which in his later life, during long years of imprisonment in the Tower, was to be his solace and distraction.

‘His natural parts being strangely advanced by

Sir Walter Raleigh

academical learning under the care of an excellent tutor he became the ornament of the juniors and was worthily esteemed a proficient in oratory and philosophy,' says Anthony Wood in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*. As he was son of a poor country squire and one of numerous brothers, Raleigh was far from affluent in his college days. Another gossip, Aubrey, relates a story 'that in his youth he was under straits for want of money. Mr. Child, of Worcestershire, told me that Sir Walter borrowed a gown of him when he was at Oxford (they were of the same college) which he never restored, nor money for it.'

It is interesting to know that it was at Oxford that Raleigh first became acquainted with Philip Sidney, the mirror of all chivalry, who afterward, like himself, was to be a favourite of the Queen and a shining light of the court.

He was still only a boy of seventeen when he left Oxford without taking a degree and went to the religious wars in France. He joined the forces of the Huguenots, and received his baptism of fire at the battle of Jarnac (which he mentions in his great *History of the World*), where Condé was slain. Very little is known of Raleigh's French Campaign except that it must have lasted five or six years, a period long enough in which to acquire the art of warfare, and to become callous to its horrors and bloodshed. What scenes of pillage and violence this boy-soldier must have seen during his sojourn in the Huguenot camp, and probably he was not behindhand in exploits of personal valour and daring, but in those days there were no dispatches to report the doings of the obscure younger son of

Boyhood

a Devonshire country gentleman at the seat of war. We can only surmise that his military training in France was of the soundest, and made a man of him. He came back to England, at the age of twenty-three, in 1575, and entered as a student of the Middle Temple. He did not, however, read law, but became a gay youth, hanging about the court, for perhaps he was already ambitious of being a conspicuous figure in it. On one occasion, after a brawl with his boon-companions, he found himself lodged for a week in the Fleet prison, and it is thought that at this time he may have been attached to the household of the then prime favourite of the Queen, the Earl of Leicester, as were so many young men who hoped to gain a footing at court.

Yet nothing is definitely known about this, and Raleigh only steps out in clear relief from the shadowy mists of the past when he starts on his first naval expedition under the command of his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert.

CHAPTER II: *At Sea, and in Ireland*

FORTUNE did not favour the first sea-faring adventure in which Raleigh was concerned, though its commander, Gilbert, had a high reputation both by land and sea. It was the first crude idea of laying the foundations of an Empire beyond the ocean, for this time it was not a question of plunder only, but lands were to be seized in the Queen's name—lands on which it was designed to plant colonies.

Gilbert's patent authorized him to take possession 'of any barbarous and heathen lands not possessed by any Christian prince or people,' and the country he had in view was 'that Northern part of America inhabited by a savage people of mild and tractable disposition, and of all other unfrequented places the one most fitted and most commodious for us to intermeddle withal.' Gilbert, together with his cousin, Sir Richard Grenville, and others, petitioned her Majesty 'To allow of an enterprise by them conceived; and with the help of God under the protection of her Majesty's most princely name and goodness, at their own charge and adventure, to be performed for discovery of sundry rich and unknown lands, fatally and it seemeth by God's providence reserved for England and for the honour of her Majesty.'

In September, 1578, Sir Humphrey Gilbert had gathered together in Dartmouth harbour eleven vessels 'furnished with five hundred choice soldiers and sailors.' Of one of these vessels 'The Falcon,' Raleigh was captain. Contrary winds delayed the

At Sea and in Ireland

sailing of the expedition for a few days, and in the Bay of Biscay, Knollys, a relation of the Queen's, who was a member of the party, quarrelled with Gilbert and deserted with all his crew. The next misfortune was the loss of a ship in a brush with the Spaniards, when Raleigh narrowly escaped being killed. After this all the ships were driven by 'foul seas' back to Plymouth, and thus the affair ended and the first dreams of founding a colony melted away.

Nothing more is heard of Raleigh till the summer of 1580, when he received a commission as a Captain of the Queen, to raise a hundred foot soldiers to fight against the Irish rebel, Desmond, in the civil wars in Ireland. He landed at Cork after a stormy voyage, not very pleased with the business before him, as his pay was only four shillings a day without 'food and raiment.'

He determined from the first to show the Irish no mercy, and his brutality toward them belongs to the darkest chapter of Raleigh's history. In those days the Irish were in a perpetual state of rebellion against their English conquerors, who had planted themselves among them, taking possession of their fertile lands and trying to force on them at the point of the sword the Protestant religion.

Lord Grey, under whom Raleigh served in Ireland, ruled with an iron hand, though his secretary, the poet, Edmund Spenser, author of the *Faerie Queene*, described him as 'gentle, affable, loving and temperate.' Under this Lord Deputy's regime in the unhappy country, according to his own account no less than '1485 chief men and gentlemen were slain, not accounting those of meaner

Sir Walter Raleigh

sort, nor yet executions by law and killing of churles, which were innumerable.'

Among the 'chief men and gentlemen' were the brave and noble Desmonds, Fitzgeralds, and Geraldines, whose only crime was a passionate love of their own fair green island, and attachment to their religion which had been the faith of their fathers ever since the good St Patrick had landed on Irish shores.

Lord Grey, an upright, high-principled gentleman in private life, was a bigoted Puritan, and when the Queen sent him to govern the Irish he was so blinded by religious prejudice that no treatment seemed to him too harsh and cruel for the unfortunate rebels. No wonder then that the Lord Deputy and his underlings talked of them as 'these Irish rogues . . . worse than dogs,' and declared that there was no way 'to daunt these people but by the edge of the sword and to plant better in their place, or rather to let them cut each other's throats.'

Just at the time that Raleigh arrived in Ireland, there were high hopes among the Irish rebels of throwing off the detested yoke, because the Pope and King Philip of Spain had sent over Italian and Spanish soldiers to help them. They had established a garrison in a fortress at Smerwick, while another detachment took up a position in Fort Del Ore, and it was an hour of grave anxiety for Lord Grey, as Desmond with a large army was marching to their relief.

It was against this band of combined foreign and native forces that Raleigh's regiment was to be engaged. His first public act in the distressful country was to take part in the trial of Sir James Fitzgerald, brother of the rebel leader, the Earl of

At Sea and in Ireland

Desmond. No mercy was shown the unfortunate Fitzgerald and he was condemned to the horrible death of being drawn and quartered. A little later Raleigh distinguished himself in the field by taking prisoner or slaughtering a whole detachment of the enemy. It is related that among the prisoners a man was taken covered with bundles of withies. When Raleigh asked him what he had intended doing with these, he replied that he would have used them as halters for the 'English Churles,' whereupon Raleigh said that the withies should now serve to hang an 'Irish Kern,' and at once suited the action to the word.

Such incidents were a fitting prelude to the bloody massacre of Fort Del Ore, which took place under the personal generalship of Earl Grey, and was thus described in his own words in a dispatch to the Queen: 'I sent certain gentlemen in to see their weapons and armour laid down' (the garrison had surrendered after a parley) 'and to guard the munitions and victual there left for spoil. Then put I in certain bands who straight fell to execution. There were six hundred slain, four hundred were as gallant and goodly personages as of any I ever beheld. So hath it pleased the Lord of hosts to deliver your enemies into your Highness' hand.' And in this infamous butchery of defenceless men who had laid down their arms on the understanding that their lives would be spared, Raleigh, to his shame, played an active part.

'Captain Raleigh,' says the chronicler, 'together with Captain Mackworth entered into the Castle and made a great slaughter.'

Sir Walter Raleigh

The Queen was not pleased with the massacre and the course of events in Ireland, and Lord Grey was eventually recalled, through the influence of Leicester, his enemy at court.

Raleigh remained in Ireland for thirteen months longer, his sword never idle, for the insurrection still smouldered on. During the winter of 1580 he was quartered at Cork. He rode from there one day to Dublin to prevail upon Lord Grey to let him capture and carry off 'Lord Barry of Barrymore,' whose loyalty was under suspicion. He obtained leave, but the country was swarming with spies, and Barry was informed of Raleigh's plan, and, to anticipate it, burnt his own castle and laid waste his estates. Then Fitz-Edmond, an adherent of Desmond's lay in ambush at the ford between Youghal and Cork, which Captain Raleigh had to cross on his way home.

With only six men as his escort, Raleigh found himself in a tight corner and confronted suddenly by a comparatively large force of cavalry and foot soldiers. Almost single-handed he cut his way through with a young Devonshire companion, whose life he twice saved, as his horse foundered in deep water crossing the river, while Raleigh, on the opposite bank, stood at bay with a pistol in one hand and a quarter staff in the other till the rest of his escort had crossed too.

Another daring feat was bearding Lord Roche in his own castle and carrying him off a prisoner to Cork through a country that bristled with rebels. On the way he evaded another ambush of eight hundred men under Fitz-Edmond, with consummate strategy, and had many other hair-breadth

At Sea and in Ireland

escapes. He was not at all modest about these brilliant performances, and never tired of bringing them to the notice of his superiors and claiming recognition of his services. He complained of his position, and wanted more forces to stamp out the rebellion. To neither of his leaders Lord Grey, nor Ormonde, the military governor of Munster, with whom he was brought into closer contact, was Raleigh loyal. He criticized them both in his letters and blamed them for the dragging on of the war.

‘Considering that this man,’ he wrote of Ormonde, ‘has now been Lord General of Munster about two years, there are at this instant a thousand traitors more than there were the first day. Would God the service of Sir Humphrey Gilbert might be rightly valued, who with a third part of the garrison now in Ireland, ended a rebellion not much inferior to this in three months.’

By the end of 1581 the rebellion in Munster had been at last crushed. John of Desmond was hanged at Cork and his head sent to be displayed in London, the Earl, his brother, a fugitive, was hunted from one end of the country to the other, and the poor ‘Kerns,’ as the common Irish were called, cowed and terrified, showed no more fight for twenty years to come. The English garrisons were reduced, and Raleigh’s Irish enterprise ended. Briefly as it has been outlined here, one would rather have dropped a veil over it altogether, if it had been permissible to do so, for in spite of the distinguished deeds of bravery that marked it, the episode belongs, as has been said before, to the least creditable of our hero’s long career.

CHAPTER III: *Favourite of the Queen*

RALEIGH left the wild and blood-stained Sister Isle and carried with him dispatches to lay before his Queen in Her Majesty's Council Chamber. Here she listened with keen interest to the debates between him and his former chief, Lord Grey, on the recent unhappy events in Ireland, and took special notice of his suggestions for its future management.

There can be no doubt that the young Captain's sharp retorts and rapier-thrusts in argument with Grey appealed to the Queen, and took her fancy as much as his strikingly handsome appearance.

At this time Raleigh was in the prime of his manhood. He was thirty years old, six feet in height, with an imposing and magnificent bearing. His short beard curled up at the end and matched the brown of his bold eyes. He spoke with a broad Devonshire accent, which added to the fascination of his fluent, persuasive speech.

His one 'naeve' (fault), says old Aubrey in his vivid portraits of great men, 'was that he was damnably proud.' It may have been this swaggering pride which made him countless enemies, for Raleigh took no pains to become popular among his rival courtiers except when it served his purpose. Heartily as he was hated he was sometimes fawned upon.

'John Long being one time in the Privy Garden with his master, saw the Earl of Nottingham wipe the dust from Sir W. Raleigh's shoes in compliment.'¹

¹ *Lives of Eminent Men*, by John Aubrey.

Favourite of the Queen

But this humble act was probably meant as a compliment to the value of the shoes rather than to Raleigh himself, as he often carried gems worth hundreds of pounds on his feet. Even at Elizabeth's gorgeous court no one rivalled him in splendour of costume.

He wore white satin doublets embroidered with 'rich pearles and a mighty rich chain of great pearles about his neck.' Every child knows and loves the pretty story of his casting his new cloak of plush and ermine across the muddy street so that his Queen should not wet her dainty feet by stepping in a puddle. There is no reason why the story should not be true, though it comes down to us on the authority of only one chronicler, gossiping Bishop Fuller.² Such an act of spontaneous chivalry would come naturally to Raleigh, who had not associated for six years with French gallants without acquiring some of their graces and elegance. The custom of spreading the cloak was not unusual abroad, especially among the Spaniards who, in spite of their cruelty and bigotry, excelled among nations in courtesy.

Quite as likely is the other story that has been discredited as legendary, the story of Raleigh scratching on a window-pane at Greenwich where he knew the Queen would come by and see the words:

'Fain would I climb but that I fear to fall.'

² Her Majesty, taking the air in a walk, stopped at a flashy place, in doubt whether to go on, when Raleigh, dressed in a gay and genteel habit of those times, immediately cast off and spread his new plush cloak on the ground; on which her Majesty, gently treading, was conducted over clean and dry.—*Fuller's Lives*.

Sir Walter Raleigh

To which she responded:

‘If thy heart fail thee do not climb at all.’

Certain it is that Raleigh’s heart did not fail him and that, with the encouragement of his royal mistress, he swung himself fearlessly upwards and soared from one success to another till he reached the highest pinnacle of fame.

The first substantial favour he enjoyed was a grant of £100 for his services in Ireland and an appointment to a command there, which he was of course excused from attending in person, for his presence at court was essential to his rôle as new favourite. The old favourites, Dudley, Earl of Leicester (‘Sweet Robin’), Sir Thomas Heneage, and Sir Christopher Hatton (‘Bel-wether’), who danced so beautifully that he was called the dancing Chancellor, pretended to be greatly chagrined by their noses being put out of joint by this upstart, ‘Water.’

Queen Elizabeth’s long-drawn-out flirtation with the hideous Duke of Angou (whom, strange to say, she had been nearer wedding than any of her good-looking suitors) had just come to an end. Leicester’s secret marriage, when the news of it had leaked out a year before, had been counted a deadly crime, and the Earl no longer basked in the sunshine of her regal smiles. But with the unmarried Hatton the Queen still coquetted and played off ridiculous airs. She tried to pacify her ‘belwether’s’ jealousy of Raleigh by assurances that she would suffer no element (meaning ‘Water’) to so abound as to breed confusion.’ And on one occasion, when Raleigh



"RALEIGH CASTING HIS NEW CLOAK OF PLUSH AND
ERMINE ACROSS THE MUDDY STREET"—Page 19

Favourite of the Queen

took possession of Hatton's lodgings at Croydon, the Queen flew into a rage and used 'bitterness of speech against "Water" saying that she would rather see him hanged than equal him with Hatton or that the world should think she did so.'

When Angou left England and sailed for Flushing, where he was to receive the fealty of the Netherlands, he was escorted to his new dominions by Leicester, Sidney and Raleigh among others. On taking leave of William the Silent, Raleigh was again entrusted with dispatches, which he carried to the Queen with the message: *Sub umbra alarum tuerum protegimur.*

But with the exception of such an occasional absence as this, Raleigh spent the years preceding the great national triumph of defeating the Armada mainly in dancing attendance on his sovereign. His star continued in the ascendant. Riches and honours were heaped on him. He was created Captain of the Guard, and given as his town residence Durham House in the Strand, one of those noble palaces with gardens running down to the river, which made Elizabethan London so fair a city. 'I well remember his study,' says Aubrey, 'which was on a little turret that looked into and over the Thames and had the prospect which is perhaps as pleasant as any in the world.' He kept a retinue of forty persons and as many horses, and entertained on a magnificent scale all sorts and conditions of men. His wealth was derived from leases of property belonging to All Souls College, Oxford, from patents to license vintners, and many other emoluments which the Queen lavished on him.

Sir Walter Raleigh

In Ireland he got the lion's share of the confiscated Desmond estates when they were divided up and scrambled for. The country had been so devastated by the sword during the late civil war that it was possible to travel from one end of Munster to the other 'without meeting man, woman or child save in the towns.' Raleigh was given the third of seignories in Cork, Waterford and Tipperary, amounting to 12,000 acres each, of fertile wooded land. He rented Lismore Castle at a nominal rate, and had, as well, a fine manor house on the coast at Youghal. To do him justice he made every effort to cultivate and render productive the soil which so recently he had helped to drench with blood. He induced young farmers and yeoman to come over from Devon and Cornwall and introduce agricultural improvements into the isle of sighs and tears, where later he planted the first potatoes in his garden at Youghal. The Devonians were told that there were pearls and even diamonds to be found in Ireland that rivalled those of the Indes, and so the sons of squires and farmers between the Axe and Exe, and Dart and Tavy found their way across the Irish Channel.

Raleigh pictured the scenes of desolation transformed into acres of waving corn and rye, with hundreds of smiling homesteads and farms, like those of his dear native county of Devon. A flourishing colony was to arise like a Phoenix from the ashes, but somehow it did not, and Raleigh's vast Irish estates caused him more vexation and disappointment than they ever brought him satisfaction and pleasure.

CHAPTER IV: *Lord Warden of the Stannaries*

IN 1585 Raleigh was made Lord Warden of the Stannaries, an important position, in which he was much more successful than as a landlord in Ireland.

The Stannaries Parliament of Devon and Cornish miners was held in the open air on Dartmoor's purple heather, at the spot where the massive pile of Crockern Tor rises suddenly against the sky. In this solitary silence, which, as a rule, the very curlews seemed shy of breaking, the hardy stannators of the moorlands had gathered from Saxon times at the summons of their Warden to hold their conventions. Roughly hewn in the grey rock of the Tor were the Warden's chair, the seals for the jurors, the corner stone of the court crier, and a table on which to place parchments and a bottle of wine for the refreshment of the orators.

Burgesses from Tavistock and Ashburton, and other towns in the west, crowds of rough and unkempt tanners from the mines, mustered in great force to this curious meeting, especially when the great granite seat in the open air was occupied by the versatile knight, the accomplished scholar and soldier and well-beloved of his Queen, Walter Raleigh. His personality had a wonderful charm for the West Country folk, who were proud to claim him as their own, and with whom he was as popular as he was the reverse among his gay fellow-courtiers at Whitehall.

Here, breathing his mild native air, he was in his element, administering the laws that he drew up for the tanners, settling their suits and redressing their

Sir Walter Raleigh

grievances. One can picture him, sceptre in hand, assuming an air of almost solemn dignity as he threw himself heart and soul into the business, the splendour of his dazzling apparel hidden for the time being beneath his robe of office, which resembled the garb of the ancient Druids.

And then when the people dispersed in all directions, streaming to their homes over the purple moor, Raleigh would probably ride round, visiting old haunts and friends; he would see himself a boy again at every turn; here was the stream in which he had fished with his gallant half-brothers for trout, bubbling down one of the ferny green combes; here the cabin of some old fisherman perched like an eagle's nest on the red cliffs, where he had been shown nuggets of gold and lumps of coral, and heard tales of adventure and of 'Frankie' Drake, which had first awakened his boyish dreams of sailing the seas in search of new worlds.

Those dreams were never relinquished even when he had donned the silver armour of the Captain of the Guard and was bound hand and foot by his silken chains to the old world. In his palatial study at Durham House overlooking the Thames, he often spent the hours of night when he was released from his duties at court, with charts spread out before him, tracing, by the help of a Hariot or a Richard Hakluyt, those voyages for which he supplied the funds and fitted out ships for others to sail in, while he, at the behest of his Queen, had to stay at home.

It must have been before his visits to Devon, to carry out his duties as Warden of the Stannaries, that Raleigh, the true Devonian, having neared the apex of his fortunes, was fired with the desire to buy



"RALEIGH PRESIDING OVER THE STANNARIES PARLIAMENT OF DEVON AND CORNWALL"—Page 24

Lord Warden of the Stannaries

back his modest birthplace, Hayes Farm, which had passed into other hands. Aubrey gives the following letter sent to 'Mr Duke in Devon, writt with his own hand':

MR DUKE,

I wrote to Mr Prideaux to move you for the purchase of Hayes a farme sometimes in my father's possession. I will most willingly give whatsoever in your conscience you shall deem it worth, and if at any time you shall have occasion to use me, you shall find me a thankful friend to you and yours. I am resolved if I cannot entreat you, to build at Colliton; but for the natural disposition I have to that place being borne in that house I had rather seat myself there than anywhere else; I take my leave readie to countervaille all your courtesies to the utter of my power. You very willing friend,
In all I shall be able, WALTER RALEIGH

COURT, ye xxvi. of July 1584.

The said Mr Duke cherished this letter for posterity in some old carved oak bureau, with other papers, but remained 'unmoved' by Sir Walter's request to sell him Hayes Farm. That he should have coveted it so much, is proof of his love of Devon and its associations. If Raleigh had to be content with his portion as a younger son of Collaton-Raleigh, in Devonshire, in five other counties he came in for vast acres, on the execution of Anthony Babington, for high treason. The wealthy young Jesuit had been implicated in a plot to murder Elizabeth and put the Queen of Scots on the throne. This plot was

Sir Walter Raleigh

unravelling by the astute Walsingham, the Queen's secretary, who played for the purpose a double game with Spain, in which duplicity Raleigh is supposed to have had some hand. Babington, anyhow, based all his hopes of a pardon on getting Raleigh to intercede for his life, offering him £1000 through a cousin, an insignificant sum indeed compared with the great accession of wealth which came to him with Babington's estates. The Queen granted Raleigh all Babington's goods and property, except one quaint clock, which she retained for herself. This marked the high tide of Raleigh's fortunes. Yet at the very moment when he had the ball at his feet, a cloud arose on his halcyon sky in the shape of a younger rival, a youth of twenty, gifted with a charm of manner and grace of person which proved of even more deadly fascinations than his own for the virgin Queen of over fifty. 'When she is abroad, nobody is near her, but my Lord of Essex; and at night my Lord is at cards, or one game or another with her till the birds sing in the morning.'

Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, was stepson of the Queen's earlier favourite, Leicester, whose secret marriage with the boy's mother, Lady Essex, had incurred his royal mistress's dire displeasure. High-spirited, head-strong and insolent, the young gallant was not disposed to tolerate cheerfully the rivalry of the man whom he dubbed that 'Knave Raleigh.'

The Queen told Essex that there was 'no such reason why he should disdain him.'

'This speech,' Essex said, 'troubled me so much that, as near as I could, I did describe unto her what he had been and what he was.'

Lord Warden of the Stannaries

One can easily understand how little the younger minion was able to appreciate the genius of the elder. What did Essex know or care about the great schemes of Empire-building which busied the brain behind that dome-like forehead? or of the big soul hampered in its 'flights of "poesie"' by the silver breast-plate of the Captain of the Guard.'

To him Raleigh was, as to others of his fellow-courtiers, merely the upstart 'Water,' and the new-comer made it his business to try and oust him from favour, finding in his dislike of Raleigh an incentive for his flirtation with the Queen, a flirtation which otherwise would have been distasteful to him; for at the age of ten this pretty boy had declined most emphatically to be kissed by Elizabeth.

Yet Essex was not a rival to be despised. He too had gifts of mind as well as beauty of person, and might have attained to greatness had he been less impetuous and violent. Full of fiery spirits and dash, there was another side to his character, as his friendship with the great scholar and astute lawyer, Lord Bacon, testifies.

A modern historian has said that Essex 'must have seemed in the eyes of Bacon like the hope of the world.'

Elizabeth made him Master of the Horse, and in this capacity friction with Raleigh was inevitable. We shall find that up to the time of Essex's tragic end, the life-paths of these two heroes often cross each other. But now we will turn for a time from Raleigh as a courtier to follow his doings as the founder of that flourishing Empire beyond the ocean, of which to-day every Englishman has reason to be proud.

CHAPTER V: *Newfoundland and Virginia*

WE have seen that Raleigh's attempt, in conjunction with his half-brother, Sir Humphrey Gilbert, to begin an English settlement in North America in 1578 had failed. Gilbert, nevertheless, was determined to try again before his six years' patent elapsed, and was always on the look out for an opportunity. The opportunity came with Walter's rise at court. By the spring of 1583 a fleet had been got together and was ready to sail under the command of Gilbert. Raleigh spent £2000 in building and equipping one of the ships called the 'Bark-Raleigh,' which must not be confused with the 'Ark-Raleigh,' an altogether different vessel which was built in 1557, and employed against the Armada.

Raleigh was appointed vice-admiral of the expedition, but the Queen refused to let him go, and also tried to persuade Gilbert to stay at home 'as a man noted for no good hap at sea.' His brother's intervention, however, gained the Queen's consent, and she ordered Raleigh to send Sir Humphrey a token, which he did with the following letter:

BROTHER,—I have sent you a token from her Majestie, an anchor guided by a lady, as you see, and farther Her Highness willed me to send you word that she wished you as great good hap and safety to your ship as if herself were there in person, desiring you to have care of yourself as of that which she tendereth; . . .

Further she commandeth me that you leave your

Newfoundland and Virginia

picture with me. . . . So I commit you to the will and protection of God, who send us such life or death as He shall please, or hath appointeth.—Your true brother,

W. RALEIGH

The fleet sailed on the 10th of July, and almost at once Raleigh's great ship deserted and came back to Plymouth. The excuse was that a fever had broken out on board, but Sir Humphrey declined to accept this excuse, and wrote to Peckham complaining that she had run from him in fair clean weather, and prayed that his brother Raleigh should make the crew 'an example to all knaves.'

Sir Humphrey sailed on with his four small ships, and took possession of the coast of Newfoundland in the Queen's name. According to a curious custom the sod was cut and a hazel wand given to the performer of the ceremony, in the presence of the captains of thirty or forty fishing boats of all nationalities lying off the coast. This was not the part of the country the expedition had first intended to colonize, but the territory was nominally divided among its members. Soon, however, they became rebellious and unmanageable, and plundered the fishing boats when Gilbert was on shore. Many were invalided home on the 'Swallow,' others died, and a move was made in a more southerly direction, toward the place where it had been originally designed to found the colony.

Now calamity followed calamity. The ships were tossed hither and thither on the stormy Atlantic. Misfortune first overtook the 'Delight,' which was wrecked, leaving the 'Golden Hinde' and the small

Sir Walter Raleigh

cockle-shell of the 'Squirrel' to fight the seas as best they could alone. The poor little 'Squirrel' was crammed with sick and fever-stricken men, who implored their commander to abandon the voyage and set sail for home. The weather got worse, and terrifying monsters appeared among the waves, in the imaginations of the sick men. At the Azores it was plain that the 'Squirrel' could not survive much longer, yet the gallant Gilbert would not forsake the little craft and take refuge in the 'Golden Hinde,' though he was besought most earnestly to leave the over-crowded boat to its fate. From the other ship he was seen 'sitting abaft with a book in his hand,' and once he was heard to call out cheerily, 'Be of good heart, my friends, we are as near to Heaven by sea as by land.' Soon after the 'Squirrel' sank and was seen no more battling against the waves. Thus perished the brave Sir Humphrey Gilbert, who had calmly faced death on the ocean often before, and preferred death to going back once more a beaten man to meet the scathing reproach of his Queen that he had 'no good hap at sea.'

The loss of his distinguished brother was a great grief to Raleigh, but it did not dishearten him or turn him from the purpose on which his whole soul was concentrated. Sir Humphrey had failed, as Cabot, Willoughby and Frobisher had failed before him, in finding a north-west passage to China, and it was ordained that a younger Gilbert, Adrian, should succeed his brother, with Raleigh's help, in striving to accomplish this task. But Raleigh's ambition extended far beyond the discovery of a north-west passage. He would never be content,

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he said, till he saw an English nation flourishing on the other side of the Atlantic.

The charter which had been held by Sir Humphrey was renewed, giving to Walter Raleigh, Esq., and his heirs 'free liberty to discover barbarous countries, not actually possessed by any Christian prince and inhabited by Christian people to occupy and enjoy the same for ever.' A condition was made that the Crown should receive a fifth part of all the gold and silver and other precious metals found. Raleigh and his representatives were to have power to punish, pardon, govern, rule; and the laws were to be 'as near as may be agreeable to the laws of England.' Expedition after expedition was sent by him with the object of annexing and colonizing such lands.

It should be borne in mind that Raleigh's first thought was always of colonization and that the acquiring of gold and riches came second. The evil of the Spanish incursion into the Indies, on the other hand, had always been that the chief object of the explorers was gold. Terrible cruelties had been inflicted by the Spaniards on the native Indians to find out the whereabouts of their treasure. This sacking of towns, and the plunder of fabulous hoards of gold and gems, had excited the greed of the whole civilized world, and it was the desire for gold which had first drawn the English mariners to the West.

It is to Raleigh's undying honour, therefore, that he established a higher ideal. Both he and his brother Sir Humphrey Gilbert believed that gold was only a means to serve commercial ends, not an end in itself. They enforced the principle that trade-colonization and the extension of empire were all

Sir Walter Raleigh

more vital to the interests of England than the discovery of mere gold. Even Spain had found out that there were others commodities more important than gold in the countries it discovered.

‘Ginger, hides, tobacco and other merchandise,’ wrote the author of a treatise published in Raleigh’s day, showing how his enlightened ideas had taken hold of the more intelligent of his countrymen, ‘it may be boldly affirmed yield far more profit to the generality of the Spanish subjects than the mines do, or have done this last age. Who gave gold and silver the monopoly of wealth, or made them the Almighty’s favourites? This is the richest land which feeds most men. What remarkable mines hath France, Belgium, Lombardy? Do we not see that the silks, calicoes, drugs and spices of the East swallow up all the mines of the West?’

Two captains, sent out by Raleigh to reconnoitre the country on which he had set his heart, returned in 1584 with glowing descriptions. They were Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlow, accompanied by the pilot, Simon Fernandez.

They had landed and taken possession in the Queen’s name of a country on a coast where grapes grew in abundance close to the water’s edge, where gigantic cedars spread their branches, and everything seemed to grow in rank luxuriance. The natives were peaceful and friendly, and they brought furs, pearls and other precious things in exchange for the white men’s gifts. ‘The King’s brother,’ related the captains, ‘had a great liking for our armour, a sword and divers other things which he had, and offered to lay a great box of pearls in gage for them. But

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we refused it for this time, because we would not have them know we esteemed thereof, until we had understood in what part of the country the pearls grew.'

'Surely this was the best soil under heaven' was their verdict when their eyes had rested for the first time on this rich fertile land of the West, and they had sailed home full of the news to Raleigh, whose plan was to get a firm foothold for the English on the northern continent of America, which should counterbalance the power of Spain in the South.

When Raleigh laid the information which the captains had brought before the Queen, she herself christened the new dominion Virginia, and gave him *carte blanche* to set about colonizing it in earnest.

The Spaniards were watching him with jealous eyes. They had spies in every English port. King Philip heard from one that 'The Queen has knighted Raleigh her favourite and has given him a ship of her own. . . . Raleigh has also bought two Dutch flyboats of 120 tons each to carry stores, and two other boats of 40 tons, in addition to which he is having built four pinnaces. Altogether Raleigh will fit out no fewer than sixteen vessels in which he intends to convey 400 men. The Queen has assured him that if he will refrain from going himself she will defray all the expenses of the preparations.'

It was unfortunate for Raleigh and the success of the colony that the Queen's infatuation for him prevented his going in person. Instead, Sir Richard Grenville was given command of the expedition, and he, gallant seamen that he was, gloried in fighting and plundering, and had none of Raleigh's high

Sir Walter Raleigh

ideals with regard to the building up of a peaceable empire overseas.

He was overbearing and tyrannical to the men under him, and converted the friendly, wild natives of North America into treacherous enemies by his want of tact and consideration.

After houses had been built and stores landed, Grenville sailed away, leaving the budding colony under the governorship of Ralph Lane. He promised to return before Easter, bringing with him fresh provisions.

On his way home he plundered a Spanish ship, and took a 'fine cabinet of pearls,' among other treasure of gold, silver, cochineal, ivory and hides. It was said the Queen claimed all the pearls for herself, and did not give Raleigh, to whom, of course, the captured cargo belonged by right, 'one pearl.'

Had Raleigh been present among the colonists, all might have been well. He would have infected them with his own enthusiasm, and exercised a discipline which would have checked insubordination and private quarrels. Things had looked promising enough to start with, but after Grenville's departure, Lane found himself unable to cope with the troubles that arose between the settlers, and between the settlers and the Indians, who were no longer described, as they had been by the first explorers, as 'the most loving, gentle and faithful, void of all guile and treason, and such as live after the manner of the golden age.'

A great blow was the death of the King's brother, who had been particularly well-disposed toward the Englishmen. The King himself, on the other hand, plotted an insurrection against them, in the disguise of a chief, and was put to death.

Newfoundland and Virginia

The colonists ploughed, sowed and planted, and searched for mines, but when Easter came and no Grenville reappearel, they became disheartened. Their supplies were running out, although the corn would soon be ready for cutting. One day in June they saw a fleet approaching the coast. It was not Grenville, but Drake, who had been struck by the happy thought of calling at the new colony on his way from the plunder and sack of Sante Domingo. The discouraged settlers were seized with homesickness at the sight of the English ships and their prosperous admiral, and, in spite of his promise of fresh provisions, they prevailed on Drake to take them on board straightaway to England; thus they turned their backs on their savage adopted home, for which they had never felt any real affection.

A ship fitted out by Raleigh was already on its way to relieve the distressed colonists. It arrived at the forsaken settlement soon after Drake had sailed, and was obliged to return, after searching for the colonists, who were no longer there, with its stores and supplies unused. Grenville soon followed on a like vain quest, but before starting again for England he left a handful of men to continue the colony on the island of Roanoak.

It was in July 1586 that the deserters landed at Plymouth with Drake's fleet. Hariot, the great mathematician and confidential friend of Raleigh, had made many researches in Virginia and discovered the use of tobacco and potatoes, so that it was with the return of the disappointed colonists that the habit of smoking became fashionable in England. Raleigh introduced it at court and smoked his

Sir Walter Raleigh

silver-bowled pipe in the Queen's presence, and all the Elizabethan gallants followed his example. But Hariot proclaimed its medicinal properties, and gave a delightfully quaint account of the way in which the Indians cultivated and used the plant. 'By sucking it through pipes of clay,' he said, 'they purged all gross humours from the head and stomach, opened all the pores and passages of the body, preserving it from obstructions or breaking them, whereby they noteably preserved their health, and knew not many greivous diseases wherewith we in England are often afflicted. So we ourselves while we were there used to suck it after their manner and have found many rare and wonderful experiments of its virtues whereof the relation would require a volume by itself.'

Hariot made a most learned survey of the whole of Virginia, showing its inexhaustible capabilities as a mercantile possession, and giving the lie to the other runaway colonists, who cited as an excuse for their failure the drawbacks of the country.

'Seeing the air there,' he writes, 'is so temperate and wholesome, the soil so fertile and yielding such commodities, the voyage to and fro to be performed twice a year with ease at any reason, and the dealings of Sir Walter Raleigh so liberal in giving and granting lands there, with many other helps and furtherances . . . I hope there remains no cause whereby the action should be disliked.'¹

¹'A brief and true report of the new found land of Virginia of the commodities there found . . . and of the nature and manner of the natural inhabitants discovered by the English colony there seated by Sir R. Grenville, K. T., in the year 1585, which remained under the government of Rafe Lane, Esq. . . . during the space of 12 months;

Newfoundland and Virginia

We cannot help thinking that the secret of the colonists' discouragement was the paucity of gold in the new country and the remoteness of the chance of getting rich quickly. To build up a fortune slowly by the sweat of one's brow was not what men went abroad for in those golden days. Raleigh and Hariot were before their time in being patriotic enough to see how a flourishing agricultural transatlantic province would prove a source of lasting benefit to the mother-country. The brunt of the enormous expense of the unsuccessful expeditions to Virginia had been borne by Raleigh, yet he was keen to make another attempt directly Grenville came back.

This time he sent a hundred and fifty picked men under Governor John White. They sailed from Portsmouth in April, 1587, a year before the Armada. The men who had been left by Grenville on the island of Roanoak were to be fetched and taken with them to found the new city of Raleigh, in Chesapeake Bay. Alas, their houses had been razed to the ground, and there was no trace of them left. An Indian who knew the English told the tale of their betrayal and murder. The Indians, as a whole, were no longer friendly to the white men, and efforts to conciliate them failed. However, building began again, and the arduous work of clearing and planting.

White's daughter gave birth to a baby-girl, to whom was given the name of Virginia. This was the first English child ever born in North America. In the midst of his domestic anxiety the Governor let

at the special charge of Sir Walter Raleigh, K.T. . . . by Thomas Hariot, servant of the above-named Sir Walter, a member of the colony, and there employed in the discoverie. London, 1588.'

Sir Walter Raleigh

himself be persuaded to return to England to get fresh stores for the colony, as provisions were getting short. He came, unfortunately, on the eve of the Armada, when all ships on the English coast were forbidden to go out of port.

Raleigh managed, with the utmost difficulty, to obtain release for two ships for the purpose of taking colonists and provisions out to Virginia. The released ships chose to go plundering instead, and with Governor White on board one of them they engaged in a fracas with pirates. They came back to England, leaving the unlucky Virginian colonists to fend for themselves. Raleigh has been blamed for heartlessly abandoning his colony, but in reality he made countless further efforts to rescue the settlers out of his own pocket.¹ Money from other quarters was not forthcoming any longer. Adventurers realized now that there were no gold mines in Virginia, but preferred looting Spanish ships, an easier and more profitable method of earning a living than tilling the soil—even the rich and fertile soil of a new world.

Nothing more was heard of Raleigh's little colony, in spite of all his endeavours to get in touch with it again, till the lamentable news reached him long afterward that all the white men had been murdered by an Indian chief. Not for another twenty years was a permanent English colony established once more in North America, but Raleigh nevertheless had sown the seeds of colonial enterprise, and shaken the arrogant pretensions of Spain to undisputed lordship of the West.

¹ Altogether he spent £40,000 on Virginia.

CHAPTER VI: *The Scattering of the Armada, and the Expedition to Lisbon*

MANY other important things had been happening in these years immediately preceding the defeat of the Armada besides Raleigh's ill-starred colonizing ventures in Virginia. There had been enterprises abroad and overseas which, whether they succeeded or failed, stirred the blood and set pulses throbbing to hear about.

Queen Elizabeth had lost the brightest jewel of her court in the death of Sir Philip Sidney, who, on the battle-field of Zutphen, after gallantly fighting in the Dutch wars, was wounded mortally, and by an act of divine selfishness gained a more lasting fame than by all his graces and talents. In the same year a greater ornament of her reign, and one who was not 'for an age but for all time,' came up from Stratford to London, a stripling called William Shakespeare, who had already written his *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and was yet to write the tragedies and comedies that we all know. In Ireland Spenser had been writing his *Faerie Queene*, and the immortal genius of Christopher Marlowe, the young Londoner whose life was to be cut off in a tavern brawl, had borne splendid fruit.

It was on a February day, in the year before the Armada, that bells had rung out from the steeples to proclaim that the beautiful head of the Catholic Scottish Queen, so long the captive and the terror of Elizabeth, had fallen from the scaffold. And now

Sir Walter Raleigh

the world buzzed with rumours of the coming vengeance of Spain, of the towering galleons she was building, to be commanded by the flower of her aristocracy, destined for a death-grapple with the Protestant power; when old scores were to be settled once for all against British seamen, who had dared so insolently to plunder Spanish gold-ships and sack Spanish towns.

From John o'Groats to Land's End, in county towns and remotest villages, people talked of the coming of the Spaniard, and were prepared to meet him.

As a preliminary, Sir Francis Drake, that most daring captain, had sailed from Plymouth on the 'Bonventure' straight into Cadiz harbour and burnt eighty of Philip's ships, which he called 'singeing his Spanish Majesty's beard,' and then he bore on triumphantly to the coast of Portugal, where he saw the Armada preparing, and challenged the veteran Spanish admiral, Santa Cruz, to come forth and do battle with him there and then. Could the challenge have been accepted, no huge fleet of Spanish galleons, as 'tall as church spires,' would have appeared later in the English Channel. But the great ships were not yet manned, and before they were ready, Santa Cruz died, and Philip appointed as admiral of the fleet an incompetent grandee, the Duke of Medina Sidonia, who had run away from Cadiz when Drake came into the harbour, and who had never been to sea in his life except in a pleasure boat. He left his orange gardens with reluctance, and had no heart for his high quest. All his hopes were set on falling in with the Duke of Parma, the powerful and cruel Spanish general who was to come from the Nether-

The Scattering of the Armada

lands, where he had been persecuting the Flemish Protestants with the finest infantry in the world, to finish on land the work of destruction to be begun by the Armada at sea.

Elizabeth, in spite of all the stories told her of these gigantic preparations on the part of Spain to annihilate the power of England and the Protestant religion, was unwilling for war. At any rate she refused to declare war, and in order to ensure peace, she talked of abandoning the Protestant towns in the Low Countries, and giving them back to Spain, although her soldiers had been pouring out their blood like water to hold them for the natives against Parma. Drake had won no open approval from the Queen by his escapade at Cadiz for this reason, yet she winked at his waylaying the magnificent caraque, 'San Philip,' loaded with a rich cargo from the Indes. In the early days of June it was towed into Dartmouth Harbour, and crowds of West Country folks, in holiday attire, flocked to see the distribution of its fabulous freight, said to be worth half a million. Raleigh was in Devonshire at the time, doing his part in raising a contingent of 2000 men for national defence against invasion. He was busy, too, strengthening fortifications at Portsmouth, and gave his advice in the construction of defences at Plymouth and Portland.

But this is all we know of his share in the glories of the Armada victory. It is disappointing to have no record of this striking figure of Elizabeth's court, playing a heroic rôle in the most stirring event of her reign. Some of Raleigh's biographers have tried to prove that he was on board the conquering

Sir Walter Raleigh

fleet on the 23rd of July 1588 and witnessed the fighting in the Channel. History, however, is silent on the subject, and he certainly can have had no command. We must be satisfied then with drawing an imaginary picture of the favourite riding with the Queen to that scene of delirious enthusiasm at Tilbury Camp, when, as generalissimo of the army, she came in martial pomp, wearing a breastplate and a farthingale, to harangue the brave soldiers and sailors who, owing to her short-sighted economy, had been languishing at Plymouth on mouldy rations and bad water. Only when the imminent danger which threatened her throne and kingdom was brought home to her did the Queen at last rise to the occasion. The clouds of depression which had hung over her since the execution of her prisoner, Mary Queen of Scots, dispersed, and she finally cast to the winds her scruples about going to war with her brother-in-law, recognizing indeed that it was a case of war to the knife. She could no longer blind herself to the fact that Philip had been plotting against her life with his Jesuit spies and emissaries for the last fifteen years, and that now Mary was gone, he entertained the idea of putting his own daughter on the English throne instead of Elizabeth, and making England a province of Spain.

It was on a Saturday in July that the invincible Armada was sighted off the Lizard. The English fleet under the Lord High Admiral Howard, Drake, Hawkins and Frobisher, came out to meet it, and these famous sea-dogs, with their superior fighting craft and seamanship and the help of such a storm that none in the memory of man had been known



"RALEIGH RIDING WITH THE QUEEN AT TILBURY CAMP"

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to rage so long and fiercely, swept the proud galleons from the Channel. That storm strewed the coast of Ireland with the flower of Spain's nobility. Grandees and hidalgos in velvet coats and chains of gold perished there miserably of starvation, or were plundered and butchered by the half-savage Irish, from whom they had vainly hoped, as being of the same faith as themselves, comfort and succour.

Thus briefly we pass over the all-important victory in which Raleigh seems to have played no prominent part (though it must not be forgotten that the finest ship in the English fleet, the 'Ark-Raleigh,' had been planned and built by him), and come to the Portuguese expedition of the following year, in which we find him active and associated with Essex.

Englishmen were more than ever confident, after the tragic fate of the Armada, that they were born to rule the waves and be supreme on the ocean. The desire for plundering adventures increased and spread among all classes. English privateers (Raleigh's among them) scoured the seas. It was a good opportunity for Don Antonio, the ex-king of Portugal, who had been an exile in England for eight years, to appeal for help to be restored to the Portuguese throne, which Philip had usurped.

He had already received aid from Catharine de' Medici, the French Queen-Mother, but Elizabeth so far had done nothing but gull him with fine promises.

Now an army of 16,000 soldiers, with 2500 sailors, was raised with the purpose of reinstating Don Pedro on his throne, in retaliation and defiance of the King of Spain.

Sir Walter Raleigh

The land forces were commanded by Sir John Norris, and Drake commanded at sea. Raleigh and Essex both joined the expedition as volunteers. Essex was forbidden, of course, to go at the last minute, and was so violently jealous at the idea of Raleigh getting away while he was detained in attendance on the Queen, that he escaped from court, rushed to Plymouth in disguise and got on board the 'Swiftsure.' Before he could be caught, the 'Swiftsure' put to sea without Drake's orders, to the frantic fury of the Queen, who held Drake and Norris responsible for her renegade younger favourite's desertion. After this she discountenanced the whole enterprise, especially as it did not attain its object. Drake and Raleigh wanted to sail up the Tagus to Lisbon, but Don Antonio, with Norris and Essex, being soldiers rather than sailors, preferred an overland march to the city. They had no guns and no commissariat, and the Portuguese, instead of flinging wide the gates of Lisbon and receiving their returned sovereign with open arms, gave no sign of welcome. While Drake waited to re-embark Norris's army off the coast, he was employed in searching for prizes, and captured a number of German hulks loaded with cargoes for the Spaniards. There was a great deal of disputing over the apportioning of the treasure, but probably Raleigh got a handsome share of the profits. On the return of the futile excursion he was at first treated graciously by the Queen and given a gold chain as a token of regard, while his rival was plunged in sore disgrace. Before long, however, Essex succeeded in pacifying Elizabeth, and to such good purpose that he made the court temporarily unbearable for Raleigh.

The Scattering of the Armada

‘My Lord of Essex hath chased Mr Raleigh from court and hath confined him to Ireland,’ wrote a correspondent of Anthony Bacon’s.

The gossip reached Raleigh’s ears and his proud spirit resented it, for after his visit to Ireland he found occasion to contradict it in a letter to his cousin, George Carew.

‘For my retreat from court it was upon good cause to take order for my prize,’ he explained. ‘If in Ireland they think that I am not worth respecting, they shall much deceive themselves. I am in place not inferior to any man . . . and my opinion is so received as I can anger the best of them. . . .’

Fitzwilliams, who was then Lord Deputy, and evidently not friendly to Raleigh, is alluded to in the same letter.

‘When Sir William Fitzwilliams shall be in England, I take myself for his better by the honourable offices I hold, as also by that nearness to Her Majesty which I still enjoy, and never more. . . .’

It is true enough that Raleigh had plenty to do in Ireland. The planting, mining, draining and cultivation of his extensive estates kept him well employed, and he rebuilt the Castle of Lismore in splendid style. Besides, he found time to cultivate literature which, in the manifold occupations of his life as courtier, member of Parliament, and Empire-builder, he had been bound to neglect, much as he loved it. So, whether or no his ‘retreat’ to Ireland was enforced, it brought him many compensations, among them, as we shall see, first and foremost, the friendship of Edmund Spenser, ‘the poets’ poet.’

CHAPTER VII: *Raleigh and Spenser*

NINE years before, in the time of the Desmond rebellion, when Captain Raleigh had been so active in clearing Munster of the unfortunate Irish at the point of the sword, Edmund Spenser was Lord Grey's secretary, and the two young poets had become acquainted. But their lives had since been cast in different places, and it was not till this breathing-space for Raleigh, in the year after the Armada, that they met again.

The old castle of Kilcolman, in which Spenser lived for ten years in peaceful seclusion, had belonged to the hunted earls of Desmond. It was a romantic, half-ruined abode, standing on the north side of a lake, with a view of half the breadth of Ireland. Here, amidst the green woodlands and misty blue mountains, Spenser 'sweetly sang,' and produced his immortal poems. Here his old Cambridge friend, the pedantic scholar, Gabriel Harvey, was his guest, and here Sir Walter Raleigh, when he was in Cork in 1589, came over from his neighbouring castle of Lismore to visit him, and, later, to carry off the poet for a time to Gloriana's court, where the lustre of his genius might shine before men instead of being buried in the wilds of Ireland.

A full account of this memorable visit of Raleigh's to Spenser is given in *Colin Clout's Come Home Againe*, the quaint and charming autobiographical poem which Spenser wrote and dedicated to the

Raleigh and Spenser

‘Shepherd of the Ocean’ when he returned to Ireland from London in 1591.

Colin tells his brother shepherds of his ‘passed fortunes,’ and begins with Raleigh’s visit. One day he relates that, as he sat

Under the foote of Mole, that mountain hore,
Keeping my sheep among the coolly shade
Of the green alders by the Mullai shore,
There a strange shepherd chanced to find me out.
Whether allured with my pipe’s delight,
Whose pleasing sound yshrilled far about,
Or whether led by chance, I know not right,
Whom when I asked from what place he came,
And how he hight himself he did yleepe
The Shepherd of the Ocean by name,
And said he came from the main sea deep.
He sitting me beside in that same shade
Provoked me to play some pleasant fit,
And when he heard the music that I made
He found himself full greatly pleased at it.

Then his guest, ‘as skilful in that art as any,’
‘piped’—

His song was all a lamentable lay
Of great unkindness and of usage hard,
Of Cynthia the ladie of the sea,¹
Which from her presence faultless him debarred,
And ever and anon with singults rife
He cried out to make his undersong;
Ah! my love’s Queen and goddess of my life,
Who shall me pity when thou dost me wrong.

And after they had done singing and piping in turn, the Shepherd of the Ocean

Queen Elizabeth.

Sir Walter Raleigh

Gan to cast great lyking to my lore,
And great dislyking to my luckless lot
That banisht had myself like wight forlorn
Into that waste where I was quite forgot.

And then Raleigh persuaded Colin to accompany him 'his Cynthia to see.'

He took with him the MS. of the first three books of *The Faerie Queene*, which were ready for publication and dedicated to the

MOST MIGHTIE AND MAGNIFICENT

EMPRESSE

RENOWNED FOR PIETIE, VIRTUE, AND ALL GRATIOUS GOVERNMENT

ELIZABETH

BY THE GRACE OF GOD

QUEEN OF ENGLAND, FRANCE AND IRELAND, AND OF VIRGINIA

No doubt it was Spenser's great desire to get his masterpiece (as far as he had written it) published that led to his accepting Raleigh's invitation. Sir Walter, on his side, may have wished to introduce his friend at court as a peace-offering to his offended Queen. If this was so, the plan met with complete success, for all misunderstanding vanished and he was restored to favour. Spenser was presented by him to Elizabeth, and she was not slow to recognize his genius.

'That goddess,' he says:

To mine oaten pipe enclin'd her ear
That she thenceforth therein gan take delight,
And it desired at timely hours to hear
Al were my notes but rude and roughly dight.

Raleigh and Spenser

The letter of the author's, prefixed to his poem (dated Jan. 3rd, 1589), 'expounding the whole intention in the course of this worke which for that it giveth great light to the reader for the better understanding is hereunto annexed,' was addressed to 'Sir Walter Raleigh, Knight, Lord Warden of the Stanneries and her Majesty's Liefetenant of the County of Cornewayll.' Shortly afterward, in 1590, Master William Ponsonby published '*The Faerie Queene* Disposed into Twelve Books, Fashioning XII moral virtues.'

Thus to Raleigh's critical insight was due the appearance of the wonderful allegory, the great awakening in English poetry for which men had been waiting in vain since Chaucer died, and for this alone the world owes him a debt of gratitude.

The Queen's patronage obtained for Spenser a pension of £50 a year, though her treasurer, Lord Burleigh, grumbled at paying it, and said, 'What? All this for a song?' The poet had caught to perfection the trick of flattery which Elizabeth's vanity and belief in her unfading charms had made the fashion of the time. *The Faerie Queene* immortalized her as Gloriana, the Empress of all Nobleness; Belpheobe, the princess of all that was sweet and beautiful; Brotomart, the armed vestal of pure Chastity, and Mercilla, the compassionate and gentle, and it was herself in the poem more than the poem itself which delighted the Queen. The great literature then springing up, of which she was the supposed inspiration, was really little more to her, in spite of her great learning and scholarly education, than a monument of that stupendous

Sir Walter Raleigh

flattery for which her appetite was insatiable, and to which all the men of light and leading of those times so shamelessly pandered. Probably the exquisite music was lost on her of the 'lovely lay' of Temptation and other glorious passages in which she was not referred to, while she gloated on being likened to

A crown of lilies
Upon a virgin brydes adorned head
With roses dight and golden daffodillies new.

Great as was the general delight and enchantment with which the first three books of *The Faerie Queene* were hailed, it is probable that, then as now, those who appreciated the beauty and spirituality of the poem most were men of the same craft. It depicted a world that was departed, the world of chivalry and romance. It was animated by the spirit of the past, and its very language was archaic, so that it was bound to appeal more to the cultured few than to the community at large.

In spite of its instantaneous success, Spenser went back, after a year and a half's sojourn in London, to his old castle in Ireland, a disappointed man. The glamour of the court of Gloriana had soon worn off for the poet: its intrigues, self-seekings and scandals had no charm for him, and when once more settled in his own home he recorded his bitter regret at having remained there so long in hopes of advancement,

For little knowest thou that hast not tried
What hell it is in suing long to bide,
To lose good dayes that might be better spent,

Raleigh and Spenser

To waste long nights in pensive discontent,
To spend to-day, to be put back to-morrow,
To feed on hope, to pine with fear and sorrow.

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As he sat again in his quiet retreat in the 'saddest of all countries,' as he himself described it, 'though as beautiful as any under heaven,' he reviewed the splendid scenes he had lately visited, enumerated the famous wits he had met and the lovely ladies he had seen in London, and dedicated this quaint diary to the friend who had introduced him into the brilliant world of court society.

The latter, much as he might cherish the gentle poet's friendship and company, had become more and more absorbed in those great schemes in which public spirit and private greed were so singularly mingled. Often Spenser must have waited, neglected, in Raleigh's ante-chamber at Durham House while Sir Walter interviewed the captains of his privateers and other mariners and travellers from the high seas. The restless man of action was a little intolerant, perhaps, of the poet's dreaminess, and seems to have reproached Spenser with being lazy.

'That you may see,' he wrote, 'that I am not always idle as you think, though not greatly well occupied, nor altogether undutiful, though not precisely officious I make you present of this simple pastoral, unworthie of your higher conceit for the meannesse of the stile, but agreeing with the truth in circumstance and matter. For which I humbly beseech you to accept in part of paiment of the infinite debt in which I acknowledge myself bounden unto you for your singular favours and sundrie

Sir Walter Raleigh

good turnes shewed to me at my late being in England.'

And this may be a convenient place to consider Raleigh not only as the patron of a poet, but as a poet himself.

His letters and the fragments of his mighty *History of the World*, which belongs to the last and most tragic phase of his long career, prove him to have been one of the most consummate masters of dignified prose. But not much of his authenticated poetry has come down to us, yet he must have written a great deal at one time or another. He set little store by his verse, and rarely took the trouble to have it printed. For the most part he appears to have regarded the making of verse as merely a distraction for his scant hours of leisure.

A contemporary gave his poetry the following praise:

'For ditty and amorous ode, I find Sir Walter Raleigh's vein most lofty, insolent and passionate.'¹

A finer compliment still is paid to his muse in Spenser's beautiful sonnet at the end of *The Faerie Queene*, beginning:

To thee that are the Summer's Nightingale,
Thy sovereign goddess's most dear delight,
Why do I send this rustic madrigal
That may thy tuneful ears unseason quite?

In answer to Spenser's address to him in *The Faerie Queene*, Raleigh wrote an exquisite sonnet, and the man who could write it, even if he had never

¹Pattenham's *Art of Poesie*.

Raleigh and Spenser

written another line, might certainly claim to be a poet of the first rank.

Methought I saw the grave where Laura lay
Within that temple where the vestal flame
Was wont to burn; and passing by that way
To see that buried dust of living fame,
Whose tomb fair love and fairer virtue kept,
All suddenly I saw the Faerie Queen,
At whose approach the soul of Petrarch wept;
And from thenceforth those graces were not seen
For they this Queen attended; in whose stead
Oblivion laid him down on Laura's hearse.
Hereat the hardest stones were seen to bleed,
And groans of buried ghosts the heavens did pierce,
Where Homer's sprite did tremble all for grief,
And cursed the access of that celestial thief.

The authorship of a poem written in reply to Marlowe's jocund pastoral, *Come Live with me, and be my Love*, had been ascribed to Raleigh, but there is no evidence to support the assumption that he wrote it, though the lines are tinged with a melancholy pessimism very characteristic of the mood in which Raleigh seems to have indited most of his verse. In his rarer, lighter vein, however, he could throw off with ease light and playful trifles, such as *Phillida's Love Call to her Corydon*, which breathes the air of the country-side and the ingenuous joys of Arcadia.

What Spenser called Raleigh's 'excellent conceit of Cynthia' was supposed to have been entirely lost till quite recently, when a sequel to it, in the handwriting of Raleigh, was found at Hatfield.

When he was only twenty-four, and still quite unknown to fame, Raleigh wrote the dedicatory

Sir Walter Raleigh

stanzas to a satirical poem by his fellow law-student, George Gascoign, *The Steel Glass*. They contained a couplet, often quoted to-day, strangely prophetic of the unpopularity his climb to the top of the ladder brought him:

For who so reaps renown above the rest,
With heaps of hate shall surely be oppressed.

Undoubtedly Raleigh's best efforts were inspired by despondency and depression and not written in his glittering hours of success. *The Lie* is full of bitterness and revolt, and brought many scathing retorts from its author's enemies. His finest literary work indeed, both in prose and verse, was accomplished in the quietude of prison life.

'His imprisonments,' says Prof. Hales in *The English Poets*, 'were in fact his salvation. Through the Traitor's Gate he passed to a tranquillity and thoughtfulness for which there was no opportunity outside. In his cell in the White Tower his soul found and enjoyed a real freedom.'

CHAPTER: VII *'The Revenge'* *and Raleigh's Marriage*

THE way was paved for Raleigh's reconciliation with his royal mistress still further when he arrived at Court with Spenser, in 1590, by the death of Leicester, followed soon afterward by the deaths of Hatton, the dancing chancellor, and of Walsingham.

Another event which militated in his favour was that Essex was in dire disgrace through his clandestine marriage with Sir Philip Sidney's widow, whom the Queen considered 'beneath his degree,' and treated in the most insulting manner. The bride lived 'very retired in her mother's house,' and was ignored by the court, but the bridegroom before long was forgiven by his infatuated sovereign, though not before Raleigh had managed to step gracefully again into the position of first favourite. He made hay while the sun shone, and during Essex's absence in France, where, to the warlike young Earl's great satisfaction, he was marshalling a force under King Henry of Navarre against Spain, Raleigh obtained the appointment of vice-admiral of a fleet, to be sent to the Azores to intercept one of Philip's on its way back from the West.

The Crown countenanced secretly these plundering enterprises, which were really nothing better than piratical buccaneering. It was the rage for young English gentlemen of quality to seek fame and fortune on the high seas, and it afforded them the same sort of excitement as football and horse-

Sir Walter Raleigh

rating does in these days. Spanish ships were to be met with all over the ocean, and they were considered fair game in times of war or peace.

Though she was careful to risk as little as possible, the grasping Queen invariably netted the largest share of the profits. Sometimes she made a pretence of disapproval at her admirals behaving like common pirates, but she never failed to haggle with them afterward over the booty. Once when she had feigned great wrath with Raleigh for allowing his privateers to plunder certain ships, she nevertheless asserted her right to a 'carnation waistcoat' which had been taken from a Spanish grandee, and appealed irresistibly to her love of fine apparel.

The expedition to the Azores in question was planned to waylay Philip's silver fleet, and if it succeeded would be enormously profitable to Raleigh and all concerned. Lord Howard was to be in supreme command of the squadron, consisting of five of the Queen's ships, some cargo ships belonging to the city of London, and the 'Bark-Raleigh.'

But when it came to the point, Elizabeth refused to spare her Captain of the Guard, Essex being still away in France. Raleigh's cousin, the old sea-dog of Devon, Sir Richard Grenville, was appointed vice-admiral instead of him, and it is easy to understand how his adventurous kinsman must have chafed and fumed with disappointment.

The expedition started in the early spring, but the silver fleet had been detained that year by heavy gales on the American coast, and Howard's ships waited for it all through the summer and autumn. While they were at anchor off Flores, the men suffer-

The Revenge

ing from scurvy and fever, and several of the crews ashore, the Spanish fleet, consisting of two squadrons of fifty-three ships each well manned and all ready and trim for action, sailed up. So rapidly did they come that some of the English ships had not time to obey Lord Howard's order to weigh anchor and get away. Sir Richard Grenville, on his little 'Revenge' waited to take up the men who were ashore, and found himself in a tight place between the coast and the Spaniards. His one chance of escape was to turn sail briskly, and he was advised to take this course.

'No,' replied the old seaman, 'I would rather die than dishonour myself, my country, and Her Majesty's ship by flying from Spaniards. I will force my way through.'

Now followed the wonderful and celebrated fight of which the English navy has a right to be proud. A poet of our own day has sung of it (who does not know Tennyson's lines):

Into the hands of God, but
Not into the hands of Spain,

and Raleigh made his debut as a writer of prose by contributing a graphic account of it to Hakluyt's tales of travel. Though he was not present, he heard the story from eye-witnesses, and described it vividly in his 'Report of the Truth of the Fight about the Azores.'

Tall and mighty galleons crowded round the little 'Revenge' and wedged her in. Again and again its decks were swept by Spanish musketry, and Spaniards swarmed like ants up its sides to be dashed

Sir Walter Raleigh

back headlong into the sea. All night the battle raged and the boom of the guns rose above the shouts of command and the moans of the dying. Single-handed, Grenville opposed his ship to fifteen great galleons, and after he himself had been riddled and shattered by severe wounds, he still stood upon the poop with blazing eyes and grinding teeth.

‘Nothing was to be seen,’ writes Raleigh in his account of the fray, ‘but the naked hull of a ship and that almost a skeleton, having received 800 shell of great artillery; her deck covered with the limbs and carcases of 40 valiant men, the rest all wounded and painted with their own blood; her masts beat overboard, all her tackle cut asunder and she herself incapable of receiving any direction or motion except that given her by the billows.’

When all hope was dead, and men, arms and ammunition had almost come to an end, Sir Richard ordered the ship to be sunk. But the men thought that enough had been done for honour that day, and it would be no disgrace now to accept the terms the admiring Spaniards were willing to offer. So the brave old lion allowed himself to be reasoned with and at last gave in. Half-dying they carried him from the shambles of his deck on to a Spanish ship, where he and the battered remnant of his crew were chivalrously tended by the enemy. He died three days afterward uttering the famous words, ‘Here dies Richard Grenville with a joyful and quiet mind, having ended my life like a true soldier that has fought for his country, Queen, religion and honour.’

Nothing daunted by the ill-success of this venture,



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The Revenge

Raleigh soon had another on foot to avenge his noble kinsman Grenville's death. The winter of 1591-92 found him busy planning an expedition on a large scale, with the twofold object in view of an attack upon the Spanish settlement of Panama and the raiding of another fleet of silver-laden caracks from the West Indies. He flung himself passionately and recklessly into the preparations for this great new coup, and staked all he had on the enterprise. By the time spring came his plans were ripe, and he strained like a hound on the leash to put them into execution. Raleigh's violent invectives against the ambition of Spain in his vigorous before-mentioned 'Report of the Truth of the Fight about the Isle of the Azores between the Revenge and an Armada of the King of Spain,' had hit their mark, and so stirred up the old animus that capital flowed in.

Thirteen fair ships supplied by adventurers lay in Chatham dockyard, and two men-of-war contributed by the Queen, 'The Garland' and 'The Foresight,' lay at Greenwich. This time Raleigh was to have supreme command, his vice-admiral being Sir John Borough. The fleet was ready to start, but delayed by an unusually long spell of contrary winds. One can imagine the impatience of Raleigh with the elements. He dreaded that at any moment the Queen might change her mind about letting him go. For already she had begun to talk of his yielding up the command to Frobisher, and just at this time Raleigh knew that he walked on the edge of a volcano with regard to his relations with the Queen.

He had followed Essex's example and made a

Sir Walter Raleigh

secret marriage. Beautiful Elizabeth Throgmorton,¹ the fairest of the Queen's maids of honour, had captured his heart long before, but he had not dared to declare his love openly for fear of exciting her Majesty's jealous wrath. In spite of the secrecy and caution with which Sir Walter's courtship had been conducted, rumours of it were now rife.

'Sir Walter Raleigh as it seemeth hath been too inward with one of her Majesty's maids,' wrote a gossip of the court. 'I fear to say who. He hath escaped from London for a time; he will be speedily sent for and brought back and what awaiteth him no one knows except by conjecture. All think the Tower will be his dwelling, like hermit poor in pensive place, where he may spend his endless days of doubt.'

The Queen had not so far got wind of the report about her favourite, and dread of discovery still hung like a sword of Damocles over his handsome head.

As he gazed at his noble ships in Chatham port, waiting for the favourable breeze, which fate perversely withheld, to spread their sails at his word of

¹ She was the daughter of Sir Nicholas Throgmorton, who had been in the Tower in Queen Mary's reign for supposed complicity in Wyatt's rebellion. Queen Elizabeth held him in high esteem, and made him her Chief Butler and Chamberlain of the Exchequer. A portrait of Lady Raleigh, 'painted by some masterly hand in 1600,' is described by Hentzler in his *Travels through England* as being of 'A fair and handsome woman turned perhaps of thirty—she has on a dark-coloured hanging sleeve robe tufted on the arms. Under it a close-bodied gown of white satin flowered with black with sleeves down to the wrist . . . a lace whisk rising above her shoulders, a bosom uncovered and a jewel hanging thereon.'

The Revenge

command, the thought of what delay might mean almost maddened Raleigh and made for the moment a coward of him. He, the man of great intellect, chivalrous instincts, and generous impulses; he who had brought the ideals of the knight errant of Spenserian romance into practical life; who was to display a careless courage and splendid gallantry in many an adventure before he passed through Traitor's Gate—this man was base enough to give the lie direct to rumours of his marriage with a lovely girl, who made him the noblest and most devoted of wives till his chequered life was ended.

‘I mean not to come away,’ he wrote to the Queen’s secretary, Robert Cecil, from Chatham, ‘as they say I will for fear of a marriage. If any such thing were I would have imparted it to yourself before any man living, and therefore I pray believe it not, and I beseech you to suppress any such malicious report. For I protest before God there is none on the face of the earth that I would be fastened to.’

Westerly breezes continued to keep the fleet port-bound all through April, and Raleigh on tenter-hooks. We can fancy how, as he looked out on the grey and silent river and the great ships anchored there motionless, tantalizing visions of them racing over the green bosom of the open sea, with all their pearly sails, fore and aft, billowing above the brown shapely hulls, arose before his eyes to make theirs and his enforced inactivity a positive torture.

He wrote despondently that he was ‘more grieved for this cross weather “than he had ever been” for anything in this world.’

Not till the end of May did the wind change to the

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right quarter, and come rioting dry and boisterous from the east. Then the squadron put to sea, but it had scarcely set sail before Frobisher followed with orders that he was to come back to court without delay. However, trusting that his denial of the rumours concerning his marriage would be believed, he had the temerity to continue his voyage in defiance of the Queen's command. All would be well, he thought, if he returned covered with glory. But this was not to be. Information reached him that the Spanish plate fleet was not going to venture forth this season, and it was too late in the year for the attack on Panama. He was further disheartened by a storm off Cape Finisterre. So he dispatched one detachment of his damaged ships under Frobisher to the coast of Spain, 'therebye to amuse the Spanish fleet,' and sent Borough with the rest to the Azores on plunder bent, while he himself reluctantly turned tail to obey the Queen's behest. When he reached England he soon learnt that a worse storm than that which he had encountered at Finisterre awaited him in London. The story of his marriage to the fair maid of honour had come out at court, and the Queen, to whom all marriages among her exalted subjects was a personal affront, though she sometimes danced at the weddings of humbler people, was 'fiercely incensed.'

This was a far more serious affair than the favourite's first disgrace. He was arrested and put in the Tower, to the unqualified joy of his enemies, the friends of Essex, and though released after eight weeks' captivity, it was many a long day before he was forgiven and admitted as of old to the royal presence.

CHAPTER IX: *The ‘Madre de Dios’*

IT cannot be said that Raleigh endured his first taste of imprisonment in the Tower with dignity and patience. On the contrary, his efforts to appease the infuriated Queen, even when we make allowances for the exaggerated flattery that was the fashion of the time, seems to us grovelling and contemptible. In a letter dated from the Tower to Robert Cecil, he wrote in the following highfalutin strain:

“My heart was never broken till this day that I hear the Queen goes so far off—(she was starting on one of her Progresses)—whom I have followed so many years with so great love and desire in so many journeys, and am now left behind her in a dark prison all alone. While she was yet near at hand that I might hear of her once in two or three days my sorrows were less, but even now my heart is cast into the depths of all misery. I that was wont to behold her riding like Alexander, hunting like Diana, walking like Venus, the gentle wind blowing her fair hair about her pure cheeks like a nymph, sometimes sitting in the shade like a goddess, sometimes singing like an angel, sometimes playing like Orpheus. Behold the sorrow of this world! Once amiss hath bereaved me of all. . . . Who is the judge of friendship but adversity? or when is grace witnessed but in offences? There were no divinity but by reason of compassion, for revenges are brutish and mortal. All those times past—the loves, the sighs, the sorrows, the desires, can they not weigh down one frail

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misfortune? Cannot one drop of gall be hidden in so great heaps of sweetness? I may then conclude *Spes et fortuna valete*. She is gone in whom I trusted and of me hath not one thought of mercy, nor any respect of that that was. Do write me therefore what you list. I am more weary of life than they are desirous I should perish, which, if it had been for her, as it is by her, I had been too happily born. Yours not worthy any name or title.—W. R.”

A sardonic smile must have flitted over the face of the hunch-backed secretary, Cecil, as he read this effusion, knowing as he did that it was not meant for his eye alone, but that the writer lived in hopes of his letter being passed on to her Majesty.

From his prison window, Raleigh beheld one day the Queen's barge pass by, and the Queen herself standing on the deck. This gave him the opportunity of acting, or rather over-acting, a rôle. He stretched out his arms and swore that it was the “torment of Tantalus” to see his mistress thus and not to go to her. But he would go to her, he vowed, as he made a feint of getting out of the window, but Sir George Carew, his keeper, caught him by the sleeve, and a mock struggle ensued. Sir Walter drew his dagger and tore Sir George's periwig from his head and got his own arm so badly wrenched in the fray that probably he was disabled for a time from writing any more passionate tirades to the Queen's secretary.

In the September of that year, when Raleigh was still in the Tower, all the world and his wife in Devon again flocked to Dartmouth. Sir Walter's good ship, ‘Roebuck,’ from which he had been so sum-

The Madre de Dios

marily recalled, had distinguished herself and redeemed the whole expedition from failure by capturing the great carrack 'Madre de Dios' (Mother of God), which, with her cargo of spices, musk, pepper, cloves, cinnamon, and cochineal, her silken and tapestry hangings and precious stones, worth 40,000 cruzadoes, was the richest prize ever brought to England.

The sacred name of the gigantic ship, and the almost inconceivable wealth her hold contained, seized the popular imagination, and the excitement upon her arrival in an English harbour knew no bounds. Before even she was towed into port, pilfering began, though Sir John Borough declared the whole cargo Queen's property, to touch which was treasonable. The Queen sent her secretary, Sir Robert Cecil, to stop the pillage, but before he reached the spot some of the sailors had crammed their pockets and trunks with treasure. One mariner alone of Saltern (Raleigh's birthplace) brought in his baggage to his humble home 'a chain of orient pearls, two chains of gold, four great pearls of the bigness of a fair pea, four forks of crystal, four spoons of crystal set with gold and stones, and two cords of musk.' The ships' crew were indignant when they heard that their master, Raleigh, was a prisoner in the Tower, and it was difficult to keep them in hand. Sir John Hawkins then sent word that 'the especial man' to arrange matters was Sir Walter, and leave was obtained for him to go down to Devonshire 'still in custody as the Queen's prisoner in charge of Mr Blount.'

Some of the 'bags of seed pearls and rubies'

Sir Walter Raleigh

brought home by the 'Madre de Dios' had found their way into the old cathedral city of Exeter, and the citizens had not been inclined to reveal to Sir Robert Cecil where they lay hid. 'By my rough dealing,' wrote the Secretary, 'I have made an impression with the mayor and the rest, and I have given orders to search every bag and mail coming from the West, for jewels, pearls and amber, and though I fear the birds be flown yet will I not doubt to save Her Majesty that which shall be worth my journey. Her Majesty's captive comes after me, but I have outrid him and will be at Dartmouth before him.'

Sir Walter Raleigh, 'the Queen of England's poor captive,' as he called himself with 'a pensive air,' we may picture riding into the picturesque, hilly, small town on the green waters of the Dart with a splendid retinue. When he so willed none knew better than he how to excite the enthusiasm of poor seamen, though, as a rule, he held, like Coriolanus, the multitude and its opinion in utter scorn. As the sight of the mighty carrack met his eyes, towering into the blue sky against a background of woods touched with the crimson, orange and brown of their early autumn glory, a light must have leapt up in them; and as the eager, sunburnt faces around him next caught his glance, ambitious dreams and hope would wake again within him, chasing away depression and the bitterness of disappointment. These hardy seamen were so devoted he might count on them surely to follow him whithersoever he led them, over unsailed seas, to untrodden shores, by the crystal waters of the vast Orinoco, through virgin

The Madre de Dios

forests to the mountains of glittering quartz and marble, in whose heart, according to Spanish legend, lay the magic region of El Dorado, Manoa (the golden city), where all the houses, and everything else, were of pure solid gold? If he found this fountain of wealth, richer than all the other countries of the world put together, if he added this to Elizabeths dominions, he must regain his old position in her affection and be forgiven by his sovereign for his 'brutish offence,' as Cecil termed his marriage.

Delusive dream, vain vision, that as the years went on rose again and again to lure him on to his ruin and lead to that fall the story of which is one of the most tragic in the pages of history.

Cecil watched that memorable scene on the quay at Dartmouth and then went into the inn to record it in his correspondence. 'I assure you, sir,' he wrote to Heneage, 'his poor servants, to the number of 140 goodly men, and all the mariners came to him with such shouts of joy as I never saw a man more troubled to quiet them in my life. But his heart is broken, for he is very extreme pensive. . . . The meeting between him and Sir John Gilbert was with tears on Sir John's part. Whensoever he is saluted with congratulations on his liberty he doth answer, "No, I am still the Queen of England's poor captive." I wished him to conceal it, because here it doth diminish his credit, which I do vow to you before God is greater amongst the mariners than I thought for I do grace him as much as I may, for I find him marvellously greedy to do anything to recover the conceit of his brutish offence.'

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The disputes with regard to the distribution of the booty from the 'Madre de Dios' were many and not easily settled. In the end the Queen claimed and received the biggest share for herself, for avarice, that most disagreeable trait in Elizabeth's character, seemed to grow rather than decrease with her years. Raleigh, to whose spirit and enterprise the whole affair was due, did not come off very handsomely, but there could hardly be any talk of his returning to his prison after services from which her Majesty had reaped such a rich harvest. Instead, he took up his abode again at Durham House with Lady Raleigh, and concentrated his thoughts on better things than philandering.

CHAPTER X: *Sherborne and Guiana*

DURING the years that he was not wanted at court, Sir Walter Raleigh took a more active part in Parliamentary debates than he had ever been at liberty to do before. He was a very remarkable speaker, and knew how to use 'his bold and plausible tongue' to good effect. No man of his day, it was said, was a greater master of eloquence, and his speeches were full of close and clear argument and cool, discriminating judgment. It is curious that for all this he was no statesman. Elizabeth, with her unerring insight into character and power of summing up the physical and mental assets of her servants, never summoned Raleigh to discuss with her the secrets of State or swore him a privy councillor.

In the Parliament of 1592-3 he championed the Puritans, and opposed a Bill for the expulsion of a sect called Brownists. But he was in favour of expelling 'alien retailers,' for it would appear that even as early as Elizabethan days there was an alien question. A large company of Dutch folks had settled in the city near St Martin-le-Grand, and carried on their trade of weaving, spinning and retailing of textiles, to the detriment, it was alleged, of the regular London dealers, 'inasmuch as three-score English retailers had been ruined by them since last Parliament.' Raleigh supported a Bill to make alien retail trading illegal, and in one of his most eloquent speeches, he said, 'Whereas it is pretended that for strangers it is against charity, against hon-

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our, against profit to expel them, in my opinion it is no matter of charity to relieve them. For first, such as fly hither do so forsaking their own King, and religion is no pretext for them, for we have no Dutchmen here but such as come from where the gospel is preached. Yet here they live disliking our Church. For honour: it is not honour to use strangers as we be used amongst strangers, and it is lightness to a commonwealth—aye a baseness in a nation—to give liberty to another nation which we cannot receive again. And for profit: they are all of the house of Almoigne who pay nothing; aye eat out our profits and supplant our own nation. . . . Therefore I see no reason that such respect should be shown them, and to conclude, in the whole, no matter of honour, no matter of charity, no profit in relieving them.'

The Bill for Disestablishing the Dutchmen was carried by a majority of 162 against 82.

It was probably at this period, too, that Raleigh frequented 'The Mermaid,' the inn where those famous convivial meetings of Ben Jonson, Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, and others took place. He was also the leading light of a society which encouraged the discussion of such serious questions as life and death, the soul and the existence of God. It was dubbed by the ignorant 'Sir Walter Raleigh's School of Atheism.'

'The truth is,' said a contemporary, 'he was the first who ventured to tack about and sail aloof from the beaten track of the schools.' Elizabeth knew that her favourite, on account of his religious toleration and breadth of views, had been branded as an

Sherborne and Guiana

Atheist, 'though a known asserter of God and His providence,' and had 'chid him,' saying it was 'against her father's honour no less than against God.'

His inquiring mind, no doubt, made Raleigh curious about all faiths and creeds, and it is related that he once passed a whole June night in disputation with an arrested Jesuit. The fact, too, that he had enriched himself with lands belonging to the Church increased the popular suspicion of his not being orthodox. Before his disgrace he had acquired, by a piece of jobbery, the beautiful estate of Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, the lawful property of the Bishop of Sarum. Here, for the most part, Sir Walter and his lady lived for the next ten years; though they kept up a stately household at Durham House, and resided there in much magnificence when they visited London, Sherborne was their favourite and dearest home. On these confiscated estates Raleigh had once, when riding to London with his brother, fallen from his horse in the neighbourhood of Sherborne, and had been so charmed with the surrounding landscape that he had persuaded the Queen to grant him the lands which she could not do without taking them away from some one else; a trifling obstacle, however, and one easily removed for the sake of pleasing a gallant knight who, if he had fallen from his horse had not yet fallen from her favour.

At Sherborne Raleigh had built himself a fair mansion, and laid out gardens extending over many acres, in emulation of the Cecils at Theobalds. In his years of retirement he spent many hours there

Sir Walter Raleigh

with the flowers and plants he loved, and among his books. In 1594 his little son 'Wat' was born to him. But there was no fear of Raleigh settling down contentedly as the discarded courtier and fallen favourite. His active mind was too full of vast dreams and many projects for self-aggrandisement and the good of his country. There were occupations which often took him away from Sherborne and his building and planting there. He still discharged his duties as Lord Warden of the Stannaries on Dartmoor, and had plans for the development of his Lismore estates and the better government of Ireland.

The richly perfumed yellow wallflowers that he imported from the Azores into Ireland, and a certain cherry, are still found where he first planted them by the Blackwater, and some cedars that he brought to Cork are also growing there to this day. Sir Robert Cecil, the swarthy, sinister-eyed secretary, and nephew of the old Lord Treasurer Burghley, whom Essex called the 'old fox,' kept up a regular correspondence with Raleigh, and was presumably his friend at court. He was the medium of repeated tentative efforts on Sir Walter's part to recapture the regard of his Queen, and establish himself again in her good graces.

It was now that the idea of the first voyage to Guiana took definite shape.

'Sir Walter having tasted,' wrote a contemporary, 'abundantly of the Queen's love, finding it now begin to decline, resolved to undertake an expedition to sea, and engaged several of his friends of great quality to be concerned with him.'

Sherborne and Guiana

This new venture was designed to be the most bold, brilliant and successful that ever was attempted, and to put anything conceived by others, and especially by my Lord of Essex, completely in the shade.

The preliminary step was to dispatch in 1594 a vessel commanded by an old captain of his, Jacob Whiddon, and his devoted servant, Kemys, to reconnoitre the Orinoco. Whiddon, a brave old sailor, with a simple, childlike nature, came home at the end of the year full of vague reports of the golden empire, but with no real information as to its whereabouts. He brought home, too, some red Indians, whose feathers and paint made a great impression as they flashed through the London streets.

Raleigh, with his face set determinedly 'towards the sunset,' now came into residence at Durham House to keep himself in the public eye and to attract, by means of lavish display, men and funds for the enterprise. There was no sign of his being the ruined man as his enemies hoped. He wore his gorgeous clothes, his jewels and chains of pearls with the same consummate easy grace as of yore. He stood in the glory of his adventurous prime, a-thrill with unconquerable eager hopes and ambition. His feet were not yet set on the dark, tortuous, downward paths of intrigue and reckless gambling which led on to his death.

He had to encounter much opposition even from his gentle wife, who trembled at his going, dreading that this voyage in search of a golden mirage might break up for ever their happy domestic life. The letter which she wrote to Cecil, urging him to try and

Sir Walter Raleigh

dissuade her husband from the undertaking, is a delightful example of a wife's anxiety and the quaint erratic spelling of the time.

‘Now Sur, for the rest,’ it ends up, ‘I hope for my sake you will rather draw Sur Water towards the est, then heulp hyme forward toward the soonsett if ani respect to me or love to him be not forgotten. But everi month hath it’s flower and everi season it’s contentment, and you greate counselares are so full of new councils as you are steddi in nothing, but we’ poore soules that hath bought sorrow at a high price desiar and can be pleased with the same misfortun wee hold, fearing alterations will but multiply misiri of which we have alredi felt sufficient. . . . Therefore I humbelle beseech you rather stay than further him. By which you shall bind me for ever.’

It would have taken a stronger inducement than love of wife and child to hold Sir Walter back from those ‘soonsett’ lands that Lady Raleigh was so unwilling he should visit. Tenderly devoted husband and father he might be, but he was not the man to make love the grand business of his life and domesticity his fetish.

His imagination was too strongly fired with visions of the Empire of Guiana and his engrossing purpose of annexing it to his sovereign’s domains. He obtained and studied all the Spanish books of travel and exploration dealing with the subject of Guiana, the mysterious region of reputed wealth beyond human conception. Thousands of voyagers, expedition after expedition had started and sought in vain the fabulous city of glittering gold, on the

Sherborne and Guiana

shores of its inland sea. They had fought pestilence and famine, thirst, weariness and heart-sickness, and then succumbed without catching even one distant gleam of the walls of El Dorado. Only a few stragglers came back with marvellous stories, which infected others with the fever—the lust for conquest and gold—and more explorers were sent to their doom. In 1594 Guiana was still awaiting its conqueror: for it was characteristic of Raleigh to think that it was reserved for him to set foot first on the virgin soil of that wondrous country, and to come back with such riches to throw into the lap of his Queen that her displeasure must be appeased once and for ever.

The expedition which set out in February 1595, under Raleigh's personal command, was a strong one for he had been successful in enlisting public interest on its behalf, and able recruits. A ship was lent by the Lord High Admiral, money came from various sources, chiefly from the Cecils, and many gentlemen volunteered their services, among them 'my nephew John Gilbert and my cousin Grenville.' Raleigh himself, as usual, risked his entire fortune recklessly in equipping most of the fleet at his own cost.

A commission had been wrung from the Queen that gave him authority to 'offend and enfeeble' the King of Spain, to discover and subdue heathen lands not in possession of any Christian prince or inhabited by any Christian people, and to resist and expel any persons who should attempt to settle within 200 leagues of the place that he fixed upon for settlement.

Sir Walter Raleigh

He arrived at Trinidad in March with only a small bark beside his own ship, and coasted about the southwest point of the island, but was unable to get in touch with the natives, who were hiding in fear of the Spaniards. Raleigh, in the description of his voyage, which he entitled 'The Discoverie of Guiana,' speaks of oysters growing here on the mangrove trees, and of the pitch lake, new and wonderful then, but now familiar enough to travellers. His missing ships joined him at the Port of Spain, and from the shore a party of Spaniards made amicable signs, so that Captain Whiddon landed to parley with them. They were afterward invited to supper on Raleigh's ship, and given a lavish amount of wine, with the idea that when in their cups they grew merry they would reveal useful information about the new country.

The Spanish guard of the governor of Trinidad, however, instead of being thus hospitably entertained were slaughtered, and the governor, one Berreo, who was supposed to know more about El Dorado than anyone alive, was captured and carried off by Raleigh, to be used as an oracle on the expedition up the Orinoco.

The exploring party left the ships at anchor and embarked in a galley, one barge, two wherries and a boat belonging to one of the ships, the 'Lion's Whelp.' They carried a hundred persons, and victuals for a month.

'We were all driven to lie in the rain and weather in the open air, in the burning sun, and upon hard boards, and to dress our meat and to carry all manner of furniture, wherewith they were so pes-

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tered and unsavoury that what with victuals being most fish, what with the wet clothes of so many men thrust together, and the heat of the sun, I will undertake to lay there was no prison in England that could be found more unsavoury and loathsome.' So wrote Raleigh, who had been used to being 'dieted and cared for in a sort far differing.' Then follow graphic details of this bootless excursion up the vast main river. The Indians, all along the coast, we are told, possessed plates and crescents of gold, obtained by their trading with Guiana's inhabitants, and the English explorers, now keen to start on their quest, were heartened once more by the oft-told tales of men who daubed their naked bodies with gold dust in their carousals, and of wealth compared with which the treasures of Peru faded into insignificance.

Berreio, the ex-governor of Trinidad, was 'stricken with a great sadness and melancholy' when he understood that Raleigh intended taking possession of the mythical land of gold and annexing it to the Queen's dominions. He used every argument to dissuade him. 'He assured the gentlemen of my company that it would be labour lost, and that they should suffer many miseries if they proceeded.' The small rivers were full of shoals, he declared, and could not be entered, the Indians would not come near the English, but would run away from them, the journey was long, the winter at hand, the chiefs on the outskirts of Guiana would permit no trade in gold with Christians, and so on. But Berreio was a wet blanket that could not damp Raleigh's ardour, and he determined to go on.

Sir Walter Raleigh

How the unheeded warnings of the oracle proved more or less right; how food ran short, and the hot air bred faintness among the weary rowers; how they saw gorgeous tropical birds and flowers, and luscious fruits, with eyes too tired to wonder, and rowed their way in canoes through rivers so narrow and vegetation so thick that they had to cut branches down with their swords; how alligators and crocodiles swarmed and ate up Raleigh's negro-boy—all this and much more must be read in Raleigh's own vivid accounts of his adventures, for there is no space in which to do the story justice here.

Though the explorers never came near sighting El Dorado, which had been their object, they had not been altogether unsuccessful when they returned home. They had navigated a network of rivers, had appeased and held friendly intercourse with the Indians, and discovered silver and other precious metals in abundance. They had paved the way for the future exploiting of a fair and fertile country, which, if not the golden land itself, was something very like it.

Yet Raleigh, after his seven months' absence, came back to London almost empty-handed instead of loaded with wealth. And thus he failed to rehabilitate himself in the eyes of his enemies. They scouted the stories of Guiana and were sneeringly incredulous. 'Some even went so far as to suggest that Raleigh had not been there at all, but had been hiding in Cornwall all the time that his faithful servants were fighting against thirst and famine and fever on the shores of the Orinoco. In these circumstances it was not easy to raise the capital required

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for a second expedition, especially as the Queen, still unmollified, refused to contribute a penny or a ship toward it. Nevertheless, before six months had passed, Captain Kemys was dispatched on another enterprise to Guiana. He was too crippled by want of money and supplies to do much beyond deepening the favourable impression the first visit of the English had made on the natives, and ascertaining that the Spaniards were again attempting a settlement there. Kemys was wholly animated, like his master, by the colonizing spirit, and on his return he too wrote the history of his voyage, and made a fervent appeal to his countrymen not to allow Spanish aggrandisement but to forestall them in this work.

‘I can discern no competent impediment,’ wrote Kemys, ‘but that with a sufficient number of men Her Majesty may and her successors enjoy this rich and great empire, and having once planted there, may for ever, with the favour of God, holde and keep it *contra judæos et Sentes*.’

But for the present Raleigh was full of another great undertaking, which was to lead to more personal glory than his first voyage to Guiana.

CHAPTER XI: *The Sacking of Cadiz*

THE old apprehensions with regard to Spain's designs upon England were rife once more when Raleigh returned from Guiana. At this moment Calais was in possession of the Spaniards. The last attempts of Drake and Hawkins on Panama had failed, and the admirals were said to have died broken-hearted in consequence. Ireland was seething again with rebellion, and the Earl of Tyrone, the leader of the insurrection, was reported to be getting military aid from Philip and planning an attack on England. Again the old bugbears of Spanish supremacy at sea, and the building of fresh armadas in the ports of Spain, were giving rise to exaggerated fears and rumours. In retaliation, preparations were being made for an English expedition against Spain, of which Essex was to be the moving spirit. Raleigh laid down the pen which he had taken up to refute the slanders against him by writing his 'Discovery of the large, rich and beautiful Empire of Guiana, with a relation of the great and golden city of Manoa,' and gladly, in this instance, joined hands with his rival.

A powerful fleet was equipped at Plymouth, consisting of 150 vessels in the spring of 1596. Of these the Dutch supplied twenty-four; the Lord High Admiral, Howard of Effingham, was appointed supreme commander of the fleet; and Essex, General of the land forces. Thousands of gentlemen volunteered for the service, but it was harder to get ordinary sailors, and Raleigh, who had to levy men,

The Sacking of Cadiz

wrote to Cecil, 'As fast as we press men one day, they come away another and say they will not serve.' For this reason he was late in joining the fleet at Plymouth, and his enemies tried to make capital out of the delay.

'Sir Walter's slackness and "stay-by-the-way" is not thought to be upon sloth and negligence,' wrote one, 'but upon pregnant design. . . .'

He arrived on the 21st of May, after having hunted renegade mariners 'from ale-house to ale-house and dragged them through the mire.' Before starting there were 'open jars' between Raleigh and Vere, who commanded the 'Rainbow.' 'Sir Walter Raleigh's carriage to my Lord of Essex,' some one reported, 'is with the cunningest respect and deepest humility that ever I saw.'

His advice that England should not be constrained to act on the defensive was followed, and when, on June 2nd, the fleet at last set sail, it boldly made straight for Cadiz, and on the 26th anchored half a league from the city, which was the richest in Spain. The inhabitants were terror-struck, as they had no inkling of the coming of the English. The fortresses were out of repair, and the guns so old-fashioned as to be almost useless. But in the harbour there lay at anchor an array of formidable galleons, with their prows directed toward the coast—eleven frigates of war and forty cargo ships.

Raleigh's ship was detached from the rest of the fleet to keep watch on the harbour and to prevent the escape of any Spanish vessel. In his absence a Council of War was held, and when he rejoined the rest he found that a resolution had been passed to

Sir Walter Raleigh

attack the town first, and that Essex was in the act of putting soldiers into boats on a stormy sea. One barge had already sunk, and Raleigh dissuaded the Earl from the perilous and foolhardy idea of attacking the town before settling with the Spanish fleet in the harbour. His own plan of action was to batter the galleons before bombarding the town. He had to obtain the Lord High Admiral's authority to countermand the first order issued, and went to interview him on his ship. As he passed Essex, on his way from the successful interview, he shouted the news to Essex in Spanish, '*Entramos! Entramos!* We may enter!' and the Earl showed his delight and approval by flinging his plumed cap to the waves in a transport of boyish excitement.

Raleigh led the van in the '*Warsprite*,' with its crew of 290 men. He started well in advance of all the other ships, much to the disgust of their captains. At dawn the next day, which was Sunday, the great fight began, in which Raleigh covered himself with glory. The '*Warsprite*'s' entry into the harbour was greeted by a thunderous cannonading from the forts and the galleys. But the only response she made was a contemptuous blare of trumpets to each discharge of the enemy's guns. Gaily she sailed on, still far ahead, though frantic efforts were made by jealous Sir Francis Vere and others to get their ships in front of him. Vere, indeed, covertly tied his '*Rainbow*' to the '*Warsprite*,' but the ropes were soon cut by Raleigh's orders. Straight before him were the four biggest ships in the Spanish navy, foremost among them the gigantic '*St Philip*' and '*St Andrew*.' These last had overpowered Gren-

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ville's little 'Revenge' at the Azores four years earlier, and Raleigh, holding his gallant kinsman ever in affectionate remembrance, determined to be revenged for the 'Revenge,' or 'to second her with my own life.' The 'St Philip' was blown up by the despairing crew, and the 'St Andrew' captured and brought to England with the 'St Matthew.'

Raleigh, in his account, written afterward, says, 'The spectacle was a very lamentable one, for many drowned themselves, many half-burnt leapt into the water, very many hanging by ropes' ends to the ship's side under water even to the lips; many swimming with grievous wounds, stricken under water, and put out of their pain, and withal so huge a fire, such tearing of the ordnance of the great St. Philip . . . indeed if any man had a desire to see hell itself it was there most lively figured.'

The rout of the Spaniards was complete, and Raleigh, with a splinter-torn leg, was the hero of the day. Though he alone had planned and carried out the victory, he generously gave honour to others where honour was due. In a letter to Cecil he wrote, after watching the sack of Cadiz from his litter: 'The Earl hath behaved himself. I protest to you by the living God, both valiantly and advisedly in the highest degree without pride, without cruelty and have gotten great honour and much love of all.'

When the city had capitulated, on June 20th, women and children having first been allowed to flee under the care of a Jesuit Father, Zensada, Raleigh was carried back to the 'Warsprite,' his

Sir Walter Raleigh

thoughts now centred on the capture of the rich Indian fleet in the harbour of Puerto Real, the great prize which he hoped to lay at the feet of his Queen, and so to remove the last vestige of her resentment. However, in this he was doomed to failure. While disputing about a ransom which the merchants of Seville offered for the fleet, the English lost their booty. Medina Sidonia, the same old admiral who had proved himself anything but a competent commander in 1588, became, on this occasion, energetic and decisive in his despair, and ordered all the Spanish treasure-ships to be burnt, and that night galleons, frigates, argosies and emigrant ships blazed to the sky.

The division of the spoils of Cadiz caused much ill-feeling and jealousy. Raleigh declared that he came off with nothing but a lame leg and pain and anguish, yet though he got nothing from the two galleons which he brought home, he seems to have been apportioned £1769 to Vere's £3628, a disparity that increased the bitterness between them. Essex was all for giving the greater share of the plunder to the soldiers in preference to the sailors, for he had no love for the sea and its calling.

There was also difference of opinion among the leaders with regard to the holding of the conquered city. Finally it was agreed that the best policy was to abandon it, and on the 5th of August the men re-embarked and left Cadiz, a pile of ruins.

Thus ended the memorable action 'in which,' says an eyewitness, 'the King of Spain never received so great an overthrow, and so great indignity at our hands, for our attempt was at his home, in his

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port that he thought as safe as his chamber, where we took and destroyed his ships of war, burned and consumed the wealth of his merchants, sacked his city, ransomed his subjects and entered the country without impeachment.'

In his *History of the World*, Raleigh describes Cadiz as one of the three keys of the Spanish Empire bequeathed by Charles V to Philip.

'We stayed not to pick any lock,' he says, 'but brake open the doors and, having rifled all, threw the key into the fire.'

It is undoubted that the galloping decline of Spain dates from the day Raleigh in the 'Warsprite' marshalled the way into Cadiz Harbour with a fanfare of trumpets. Drake, when he had sailed up to Cadiz in 1587, had merely 'singed the King of Spain's beard,' and it was only the audacity of the action which had amazed and infuriated his Majesty. There had been no talk of landing, and it was simply regarded as an astounding naval *coup de main*. But this sacking of Cadiz in 1596, without a check, the destruction of the finest ships of Spain and of forty laden Indian carracks, was a serious affair, calculated to bring the aged and embittered Spanish monarch to his grave. It wrung from even Raleigh's enemies admiration and warm words of praise.

'Sir W. Raleigh did in my judgement no man better,' testified Sir Arthur Standen, a follower of Essex. 'I never knew that gentleman till this time, there are in him excellent things besides his valour.'

So friends and enemies joined their voices in appreciation of Raleigh's heroic achievement. The

Sir Walter Raleigh

Queen alone still held aloof, though she was rapidly softening toward her fallen favourite. She was indignant that the spoils of the expedition were not greater, and went so far as to abuse her trusted minister, Burghley, for pleading the right of Essex to reap profits from his own prisoners. Elizabeth's thwarted avarice blinded her to the distinguished services which had been rendered her and the country at Cadiz. At first she received Essex with open arms, but the question of booty soon led to quarrels between them, and then she turned once more to Raleigh and received him graciously in May 1597, just nine months after his return from Spain. Again he donned his splendid silver armour and, as Captain of the Guard, rode out on a June evening at her Majesty's side, engaged in confidential converse as of old.

His four years' banishment from court were over, and the estrangement as if it had never been.

CHAPTER XII: *The Island Voyage*

AFTER his restoration to favour, Raleigh's friendship with Robert Cecil, the Secretary of State, seemed to increase rapidly. Cecil's little son was sent to Sherborne to be the playmate of young Walter Raleigh and to share his studies. On the death of Cecil's wife, in 1597, Sir Walter wrote his friend a very beautiful letter of tender sympathy, signing himself, 'Yours ever beyond the power of words to utter,—W. RALEIGH.'

Curiously enough, Essex, who had furiously resented Cecil being appointed Secretary of State in preference to Sir Thomas Bodley, whom he had recommended for the post to the Queen, was, at this time, on excellent terms with both Cecil and Raleigh. The three were intimate together. 'Often goes the Earl,' wrote a contemporary, 'to Sir Robert Cecil's house, very private where they all meet,' and, later, the same writer asserted, 'none but Cecil and Raleigh enjoy the Earl of Essex, they carry him away, as they list.'

Robert Cecil, his father's own son, a courtier from the cradle, to whom was attributed one of the 'rarest and most excellent wits in England,' was pledged to that policy of moderation which for forty years had stood Elizabeth in such good stead. Essex, on the other hand, was perpetually advocating a policy of aggression toward Spain, and his turbulence often alarmed and angered the Queen. What motive Cecil had now in turning round and stirring up Essex in his belligerent schemes, no one

Sir Walter Raleigh

could guess. One thing was certain. It was not done for love of the warlike Earl or to his ultimate advantage. Probably the secretary's object in encouraging Essex to embark on fresh and daring adventures, which involved her Majesty in heavy expenditure and brought her small gain, was in some dark, mysterious way for the sole benefit of Robert Cecil.

The friendly relations between Raleigh and Essex after the victory of Cadiz were sustained by tidings coming to England of Spain's meditated revenge. Philip, it was said, had got another fleet ready to sail at Ferrol. The two temporarily reconciled rivals were all eagerness to strike another blow against Spain in her own dominions. No one knew better than Cecil that the talk of an avenging Spanish Armada was merely braggadocio; that Philip was powerless to do anything more formidable than supply the Irish with totally inadequate help. Everything was in hopeless confusion at Ferrol and Corunna. The Spaniards were bankrupt, without money, men or armaments. There was no real danger to England now from the impotent King of Spain, but rumour and public opinion said otherwise. So a fleet of 150 sailing vessels, with 5000 soldiers on board, sailed from Plymouth on the 19th of July. The command was given to Essex, and Raleigh was his vice-admiral. Tempestuous weather at the outset compelled the ships to put back into harbour, to the desperation of Essex.

"I do constantly believe," wrote Raleigh to Cecil, that either my Lord General will wrestle with the

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seas to his peril or if constrained to come back will be found utterly heart-broken.'

Provisions ran short and fever broke out among the crews. Essex and Raleigh rode post-haste back to London, and the former implored the Queen to allow him to put to sea again directly his ships were in order and the wind in the right quarter. The season was so advanced, and the enemy said to be preparing, that the Queen objected to her ships and men being exposed to such risks as the expedition would now entail.

After much persuasion she gave her consent to fire-ships being sent into the harbour of Ferrol to burn the Spanish fleet, but would permit no engagement on land. The troops were to be left behind, and Essex was made to promise that he would take no personal part in the operations. The dangerous business was to be entrusted to Raleigh.

When at last the fleet set sail once more, on August 17th, without the troops, it was caught in another great storm in the Bay of Biscay. Raleigh's ship, the 'Warsprite,' broke her main yard-arm and was separated from the rest of the fleet. He only managed to come up with it again when the islands were reached, and his enemies were not slow to represent to Essex that he had wilfully deserted, and the impulsive Earl sent home a complaint forthwith of Raleigh's conduct. To do him justice, he afterward apologized frankly, and confessed to Raleigh that he had been 'taxed secretly with strange reports' arising 'from the cankered and scandalous disposition of those who made them.' He showed Raleigh much cordiality when the fleet was reunited off

Sir Walter Raleigh

Flores, and sought his society. But all too soon his good humour evaporated, the next escapade of his rear-admiral putting him in high dudgeon.

It had been agreed that the two were to make a joint attack on the Island of Fayall. Raleigh, however, on arriving there, could see nothing of Essex, and finding himself first at the rendezvous, and being fired on by soldiers who lined the beach to dispute his landing, he was naturally impatient to begin operations. For four days he waited, restraining the eagerness of his men and watching Fayall's preparations for defence, and being dared by the enemy to come on and attack, till at last he could contain himself no longer. He pushed forward to the shore, followed by 260 men, leaving the Dutch contingent behind to receive their orders from the Commander-in-Chief.

As they came to the beach they were fired on, so hotly that the men flinched at landing. Raleigh rebuked them with 'reproachful words,' and had his own boat rowed on to the rocky beach. Breast-high in the surf he led the attack on the trenches, clambering over rocks, with no armour but his gorget and helmet. Panic-stricken, the defenders fled, throwing away their weapons. Some of Raleigh's men were killed, but he now drew reinforcements from the ships and enlisted the services of the Dutch. He led the party full in face of the fort, which gave them a warm reception, but its defenders soon abandoned it for another perched on a high craggy hill. Raleigh found nearly all his men unwilling to reconnoitre this eminence, and in disgust undertook to do it himself, alone and unaided. His cousin, Sir



“BREAST-HIGH IN THE SURF HE LED THE ATTACK.”

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Arthur Gorges, and ten of his personal friends, followed him. Two lost their lives. Gorges was wounded in the leg, and Raleigh's clothes were pierced with bullets. 'They plied us so fast with small shot,' recorded Gorges, 'that I well remember he wished me to put off a large red scarf which I then wore, being, as he said, a very fair mark for them. But I not being willing to do the Spaniards so much honour, though I could have wished it had not been on, answered the rear-admiral again that his white scarf was as eminent as my red, and therefore I would now follow his example.'

Before a systematic attack on the fort could be begun it was deserted by the garrison, and the whole island was in Raleigh's possession. Essex arrived the next day with his fleet, and found the work done.

The Lord General was furious at having had no hand in the glorious achievement of taking Fayall. Some of his 'cankered and scandalous' advisers went so far as to talk of a court martial, and of Raleigh deserving to lose his head. He was charged with 'a breach of order and the articles' in landing on the island in the absence of his superior in command. Raleigh defended himself with dignity and coolness. He took all the blame on himself and exonerated his companions. Essex calmed down sufficiently to go ashore to visit Raleigh in his lodgings. Sir Walter invited the Earl to sup with him, and took care to explain that should the invitation be accepted he claimed no privilege or favour if he wished to call him to further account. Sir Christopher Blount, who was in attendance on

Sir Walter Raleigh

Essex, had the effrontery to reply for him that he thought 'my lord would not sup at all.' Whereupon Raleigh crushingly retorted to the effect that as for Sir Christopher's own appetite he might (when he was invited) disable it at his own pleasure. But if the Earl would stay he would be glad of his company.'

While these events were passing at the Azores, the Spaniards had succeeded in getting together an Armada of a sort and had sailed for Ireland, only to be driven back by a storm to the coast of Spain. The English fleet got home without further adventure beyond the capture of three caracks from Brazil. Essex was received by his sovereign at first with an outburst of fury, but the fascination of his presence soon pacified her again, though the favourite recognized to his chagrin that during his absence he had lost much of his influence at court. Lord Howard of Effingham had been created Earl of Nottingham in recognition of his services at Cadiz, and so took precedence of the Commander-in-Chief by virtue of his new patent combined with his rank as Lord High Admiral.

The young Earl was so nettled at this that he became more overbearing and arrogant than ever. He challenged the Lord Admiral to fight, insulted his sons and feigned illness to deprive the Queen of his society. It was Raleigh who acted the part of peacemaker, and it was at his instigation that Essex was made Earl Marshal of England, and, after sulking in his tent, returned to court. He was in a mood to quarrel with anyone, and the box on the ear which the exasperated Queen administered to

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him one day when his rudeness had provoked her beyond endurance was the beginning of the end. Essex's *débâcle* was not far off. His petty jealousy of Raleigh was displayed at this time in what was called his 'Feather Triumph.' Having heard that Raleigh was to appear at a tourney at Whitehall on the Queen's birthday, with his men flaunting orange-tawny plumes in their caps and wearing orange-tawny favours, Essex provided himself and his vast train with feathers and favours exactly similar in colour 'to brave the knight, or to confound his suite with his own.'

Elizabeth had welcomed Raleigh after his exploits at Fayall with every mark of approval, and the crowd who made an idol of Essex and had never cared for Raleigh hated him more than ever for having, as it were, ousted the popular Earl from his position as pet of the Queen. Still suffering from the splinter wound in his leg, Sir Walter was glad to get away to nurse it for a time at Bath. He then went to his dear home at Sherborne for a long period of peace and rest, and temporarily, at any rate, the antagonism between the two great rivals was in abeyance.

CHAPTER XIII: *Fall of Essex*

THE dark tragedy of the once gay young favourite's fate fills the stage from 1598 to 1601, when one February day Essex paid the penalty for his headstrong rashness and folly by death on the scaffold. From his busy life, Raleigh (now Governor of Jersey in addition to his other offices) snatched time to play a minor though sinister part in the events which led up to the execution of his rival.

The success of Tyrone's rebellion made the condition of Ireland the burning question of the day. In consideration of the grave reverses the English intruders had suffered at the hands of the rebels, and the relations of intimacy existing between them and Spain, vigorous and coercive measures were said to be absolutely necessary. It was first proposed that Raleigh himself should go to Ireland as Lord Deputy to suppress discontent with an iron hand, but he 'little liked' the suggestion, and finally the supreme command of Irish affairs was offered to Essex.

Naturally the Earl was unwilling to leave the field of court intrigues clear for the manœuvres of Raleigh and Cecil, yet his restlessness and desire to make a new bid for fame prompted him to accept the position of power, and in April 1599 he went to take up his rule in Ireland. Almost directly he seems to have wildly regretted the step he had taken.

'From a mind delighting in sorrow,' he wrote to the Queen, 'from spirits wasted with passion, from a heart torn in pieces with care and travail—what service can your Majesty expect, since any past service deserves no more than banishment and pro-

Fall of Essex

scription to the cursedest of islands?' And later he complained, 'From England I receive nothing but discomforts and soul's wounds . . .' and he goes on to impute to Cecil, Raleigh and Raleigh's new friend, Cobham, a wish (that they never harboured) that Tyrone should triumph. It was Essex himself, who after six months' ineffectual attempt at crushing the rebellion, made a truce with the Irish leader; and Sir Christopher Blount, who lost his head for being concerned in Essex's conspiracy, gave evidence at his trial of Essex having been only dissuaded by himself from raising the standard of revolt in Ireland at the head of 4000 soldiers of the Queen. After appointing the Earl of Southampton, his own particular friend, to an important command, in defiance of the Queen's express wishes, he took the still more fatal step of suddenly, without her leave, rushing over to England and arriving at her palace of Non-such in a dusty, travel-stained condition.

He forced his way into her chamber, and was guilty of the cardinal crime of finding the Queen in a not prearranged deshabelle. Here comes in the story (disallowed, like the story of Raleigh spreading the cloak, by conscientious historians) of false tresses lying about on the dressing-table and the Earl's unconcealed contempt thereof. Such blundering disobedience was never to be pardoned. That night Essex was practically arrested and his ruin assured. There were two factions at court, one in support of the Earl, and the other (in whose ranks was Raleigh) eager to hurry him to his doom. The people in London and the provinces were on the side of the popular young hero whose many engaging quali-

Sir Walter Raleigh

ties had won their hearts from the first. And officers who had fought under him in Ireland, came over in large numbers to stand by him in his time of trial.

His personal friends—Mountjoy, Southampton and Blount, the Earl of Worcester and Rutland—were ready to give their lives for him. He posed in the eyes of the populace as the victim of Raleigh and his party's jealousy and malicious spite, but he attributed none of his misfortunes to his own folly. There is no doubt that Raleigh had every reason to wish Essex out of the way. He was plotting treason against the State (having been once more released), and his triumph would have involved Raleigh's ruin. It is not surprising, therefore, that he should have expressed himself as strongly as he did in the following letter to the Queen's secretary:

'I am not wise enough to give you advice; but if you take it for good council to relent towards this tyrant, you will repent it when it shall be too late. His malice is fixed and will not evaporate by any of your mild courses. For he will ascribe the alteration to Her Majesty's pusillanimity and not to your good nature; knowing that you work but upon her humour and not out of any love towards him. The less you make him, the less he shall be able to harm you and yours. And unless Her Majesty's face favour him, he will again decline to a common person. . . . Look to the present and you do wisely. His son shall be the youngest Earl of England but one, and if his father be kept down well, Cecil shall be able to keep as many men at his heels as he and more too. . . . But if the father continue he will be able to break the branches and pull up the tree

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root and all. Lose not your advantage; if you do I read your destiny.—Yours to the end.—W. R.’

But though his protesting against leniency toward Essex may be natural, Raleigh’s admirers would like to think of him as having displayed more generosity to an enemy. During the Fayall dispute, when Essex was urged by his advisers to bring Raleigh before a court martial for insubordination, the Earl replied, chivalrously, ‘If he had been my friend, I would have done so.’ He thus showed that he recognized a code of honour in dealing with enemies more stringent than that demanded by the claims of friendship. Not so Raleigh, who now could not conceal his eagerness to hasten the undoing of his popular rival. Yet, before condemning him, we must consider the circumstances, and admit that there was ample cause for his apparently vindictive attitude.

Essex’s recovery of power and position, as has been said before, would mean ruin, if not death, to Raleigh and his friends.

In his letters to Elizabeth from Ireland he had abused them in no measured language. He had also been writing to the future king of England, James of Scotland, tales of Raleigh and Cobham favouring the aspirations of Philip’s daughter, the Infanta of Spain, to Elizabeth’s throne, an altogether groundless charge. In every way he could, Essex had striven to damage the reputation of Raleigh, Cecil and Cobham, and make mischief at court. His hostility was bitter and implacable toward them, and they had everything to fear from any renewal of his ascendancy over the Queen.

And it was not a case of Raleigh kicking a man

Sir Walter Raleigh

when he was down. Essex, even if disgraced, had a powerful following, and was the favourite of the mob who, however, were to desert him at the crucial moment of insurrection.

On the 7th of February the Earl's friends met at Essex House, where, after pretending to be ill in the country to excite the pity of the Queen, he had returned and given sumptuous entertainments to his followers. He had been winning over the Puritans to his side by denunciations of Spain and the Catholics, and now the hour seemed ripe for carrying out his absurd plot of seizing Whitehall and compelling the Queen to dismiss Raleigh, Cecil and the rest of her advisers, and summon Parliament and settle the vexed question of the succession once for all. Spies got wind of the plan, and the Palace guards were doubled. The following Sunday morning 300 gentlemen were to ride through the city stirring up the citizens by loudly proclaiming the Earl's grievances and what he had suffered from Raleigh, about whom the public was always ready to credit any calumny. Just before they started, Raleigh sent a message to Sir Ferdinand Gorges, one of the conspirators and a cousin of his own, asking him to come and see him at Durham House. Gorges was given leave by Essex to go, on condition that, instead of entering the house, he was interviewed by the Captain of the Guard on the river. Raleigh rowed out to meet Gorges, alone in his boat, as usual careless of his own safety. He advised his cousin to escape to Plymouth as a warrant was out for his arrest. Gorges said it was too late, for he had committed himself with 2000 'other gentlemen who had

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resolved that day to live or die free men.' Another of the conspirators, Sir Christopher Blount, had advised Gorges to take advantage of the interview by killing Raleigh. Gorges refused, but Blount, watching, with four armed men, from a little distance what passed on the river, sent musket shots at Raleigh's retreating figure as he rowed back to Durham House, after severely admonishing Gorges and reminding him of his duty of allegiance.

The desperate Earl, a little later, rode beyond Temple Bar with his train of 200 gentlemen, calling out that Raleigh had laid an ambuscade for him and his life was in jeopardy. The citizens stopped on their way to church and stared at him, but not one showed any inclination to do more than listen. Much as they might have sympathized with a brilliant, generous young favourite in disgrace, they were not now disposed to take up arms against the State on his behalf for the sake of a private grievance. Essex saw that he had made a false move when a voice in the crowd murmured 'Treason,' and he turned his horse's head back in the direction of the river, flung himself into a boat and rowed to Essex House. He found it besieged, and threw up the game. Ten days afterward he was tried and condemned for high treason. On Ash Wednesday Essex was executed at the Tower, Raleigh being present on duty as Captain of the Guard, as he had been in the same capacity present at the trial.

Thinking that the doomed man might wish to speak with him and ask his forgiveness, Raleigh took up a position near the scaffold. This was misinterpreted by the mob, who hated and detested Raleigh

Sir Walter Raleigh

as much as it still worshipped the fallen idol, as a wish to exult over the fate of his enemy. When Raleigh heard the murmurings of the crowd to this effect, he retired to a distant window of the armoury where he witnessed the last terrible scene, with tears pouring down his cheeks.

Years and years afterward, when he too stood on the scaffold to meet the same end, Raleigh refuted the slander that he had gloated over the death of Essex. 'True it was,' he said, 'that I was of the contrary faction, but I bare him no ill affection, and always believed it had been better for me if his life had been preserved, for after his fall I got the hatred of those who wished me well before, and those who set me against him, set themselves afterwards against me and were my greatest enemies.'

When the tragedy was over, observers have recorded how the Captain of the Guard rowed home with a very heavy and sorrowful countenance. He had lost his most formidable antagonist, but the Queen's sun was setting, and he who was to come after her, James VI of Scotland, was already being poisoned against Raleigh in the secret correspondence of his false friend, the double-faced Cecil. The secretary was no more able to tolerate a rival in the shape of a friend than he was in that of a declared enemy like Essex. Maybe that Raleigh had some presentiments for the future that Ash Wednesday as he rowed over the shining waters of the Thames to Durham House, and it was not only the recollection of what he had just seen which brought the cloud of sadness to his face, but dim forebodings of other scenes of tragedy in which he was to play the leading part.

CHAPTER XIV: *Queen Elizabeth's Last Days*

THE aged Queen was never the same after the head of her favourite had rolled from the block. Yet she affected at first a strange and, to our ideas, outrageous callousness to hide her real feelings of grief. When the news was officially announced that the tragedy was over, the Queen, who was playing on the virginals, continued her performance as if nothing had happened. Raleigh was present, and the Earl of Oxford, giving him a significant glance, remarked, referring to the action of her Majesty's fingers on the keys of the instrument, 'When Jacks start up, then heads go down.' Every one understood the bitter point of this allusion.

Elizabeth ordered a declaration of Essex's treasonable misdeeds to be published, and a sermon, in which he was denounced, to be preached at St Paul's Cross. The people of London resented both. They could not forgive the Queen, and her appearance in public was in these days greeted with silence instead of with the old shouts of loyal applause.

The loss of Essex left Sir Robert Cecil without a rival in the Court or Cabinet, and he soon exercised his power to the utmost. Essex had confessed to carrying on a secret correspondence with the King of Scots, and had named the agent he had used. The cunning Cecil lost no time in making use of the same tools to serve his own ends. Those who were left of the Essex faction, now without a leader, were ready to sell themselves to the highest bidder. Thus

Sir Walter Raleigh

the secretary was able to establish a complete understanding with King James from which Raleigh, even if he had desired to be in it, was shut out. While Cecil was providing for his future, Raleigh, on the contrary, appeared to be curiously indifferent to the inevitable change that was coming, conscious that the favour of his sovereign, whose life was gradually ebbing away, was all he had to cling to. Well knowing how unpopular he was both at court and in the country, he was reluctant in making advances to the future sovereign. Not that he was content with things as they were, for he wrote at this time to Elizabeth in the following exaggerated tone of injury:

‘Your Majesty having left me, I am left all alone in the world and am sorry that I ever was at all. What I have done is out of zeal and love and not by any encouragement, for I am forgotten in all rights and in all affairs and mine enemies have their will and desire over me.’

The old grievance was rankling in Raleigh’s bosom as he wrote this, the grievance that he had never been made one of her Majesty’s privy councillors or offered a more grandiloquent title than that of plain knight.

He seems to have had no suspicion of the real danger he stood in, from the machinations and intrigues of the man with whom he believed he was united in the bonds of true friendship. There were many others concerned in plotting his ruin, and to follow all the ramifications of the conspiracy against him would fill a volume. Suffice it to say that it was Cecil, aided by the infamous Lord Henry Howard

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(afterward the murderer of Sir Thomas Overbury), who worked most assiduously against him, and was the chief instrument in discrediting him with King James.

Now that her days were numbered the Queen showed a greater aversion than ever to discussing the subject of the succession to her throne. But statesmen were bound to consider it, and Cecil himself would have favoured the claims of the beautiful and fascinating Arabella Stuart had she not rejected his proposal to marry her and so given him cause for personal pique. Arabella's right was equal to that of James, for she was the great-grand-daughter of Margaret Tudor, the sister of Henry VIII and a cousin of James. The unfortunate Queen of Scots had disinherited her son James in her will, and bequeathed her rights to the English Crown to Philip of Spain, Elizabeth's brother-in-law and old enemy, whose claim was also backed by his descent from Philippa Plantagenet, a daughter of John of Gaunt. But the old king, Philip II, was now dead, and the new King (Philip III) was far too embarrassed with domestic affairs and financial bankruptcy to support materially the Infanta's pretensions. She and her husband were getting old and had no children, and really had no desire to succeed to the English throne; it was as much as they could do to keep the Netherlands. Spanish diplomacy therefore decided on dropping the Infanta's claim, and the English Catholics were informed that the King of Spain would support any candidate they might select.

The decision was come to in March 1603, and the

Sir Walter Raleigh

claimant chosen was Arabella Stuart, who, after, when a child of twelve, being fêted by Elizabeth as her probable successor, was under a cloud and spending the last days of the Queen's reign in prison. If Cecil had not decided to embark on intrigues in favour of James, for the reason given, it is quite possible that the Lady Arabella might have peacefully ascended the throne. There would have been no disloyalty on the part of Raleigh if he had worked for this end, as the question of the succession was an open one. The idea was to approach Elizabeth's ministers and to enlist them on behalf of the new and disinterested Spanish plan to exclude the Scot, who was regarded by the majority of Englishmen as a foreigner, and undoubtedly communications to this effect may have passed between Raleigh and Cobham and the envoy Aremberg.

Meanwhile Cecil carried on his game of intrigue merrily in league with Lord Henry Howard, who played the basest part of all in the dark drama of betrayal.

Cecil could write thus of the man who had been his valued friend:

‘I do profess, before Him that knoweth and searcheth all men's hearts, that if I did not some times cast a stone into the mouth of these gaping crabs [Cobham and Raleigh] when they are in the prodigal humour of discourses they would not stick to confess daily how contrary it is to their nature to resolve to be under your sovereignty though they confess (Raleigh especially) that *rebus sic stantibus* natural policy forceth him to keep on foot such a trade against the great day of mart . . .’ and so on.

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King James is begged not to believe anything that Raleigh says on any account whatever. Cecil then adds, 'I will leave the best and worst of him to 3 [the cipher in the secret correspondence standing for Lord Henry Howard] in whose discretion and affection you may sleep serenely.'

This Howard, who had been a spy in the pay of Spain, was possessed by the most virulent hatred of Raleigh and Cobham and their supposed friend, Northumberland. 'Hell cannot afford such a like triplicity,' is how he spoke of the three. When, in 1601, Raleigh had received James's emissary, the Duke of Lennox, and held friendly conferences with him at Durham House, Howard worked himself up into a frenzy, and wrote to the Scotch court that Lennox was raising a party against Cecil, repeating that Raleigh, and Cobham were secretly opposed to his succession. Not content with this, he tried to work a dastardly scheme by which the old Queen, sickening for her last illness, was to be alienated from Raleigh and her mind poisoned against Cobham and Northumberland. 'Her Majesty must know,' he wrote to Cecil, 'the rage of their discontent for want of being called to that height which they affect, and be made to taste the peril that grows out of discontented minds. . . . She must know that the blame is only laid on her. . . . She must be taught to see the peril that grows unto princes by protecting, countenancing or entertaining persons odious to the multitude.' It must be impressed on the Queen by her secretary that 'Rawlie who in pride exceedeth all men alive, finds no vent for paradoxes outside a council board . . . ' that his wife is 'as

Sir Walter Raleigh

furious as Proserpine with failing of that restitution at Court, which flatterie had moved her to expect.' Then follow all sorts of wicked suggestions for entangling Raleigh and Cobham by implicating them in plots which did not exist.

Yet all this time Raleigh's generous confidence in the friend who was serving him in this underhand manner seems to have remained unshaken, for in writing to Cecil on business in 1602 he ends his letter with the following touching expression of good faith:

'If we cannot have what we would, methinks it is a great bond to find a friend who will strain himself in his friend's cause in whatsoever as this world fareth.'

We have seen how Cecil was 'straining himself' in Sir Walter's cause!

The passing of Elizabeth's great spirit was attended by many painful and affecting incidents, For long the Queen obstinately refused to go to bed and crouched on the floor of the Presence Chamber among her cushions. She could not be persuaded to take either medicine or spiritual comfort. Her last hours were troubled by terrors and horrid visions. At times she would plunge her dagger through the arras at an imaginary foe, or behold the phantom of her own wasted form pass before her glazing eyes.

At last the end came at Richmond Palace on March 24th, 1603. Raleigh was not present at the death of the Queen. Her true and loyal knight-errant for so many years, the last of those gallant and brilliant figures that had added to the lustre of

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her court and made it the admiration of the world, he held aloof, and the dying Queen can have expressed no wish to see him or he certainly would have come and not have allowed his duties in Jersey or the West Country to detain him. Thus even before the old Queen breathed her last, disgrace had descended on Raleigh, and Cecil and Lord Henry Howard's deep-laid schemes were brought to a triumphant issue.

The new sovereign came to the throne with an almost insane prejudice against him. Raleigh's day was over, and ruin stared him in the face. There was no one to stand up for him outside Cornwall and Devon where he was ever beloved.

CHAPTER XV: *Plots and Conspiracies*

A MEETING was held at Whitehall, directly after the Queen had passed away, to proclaim the accession of James Stuart to the throne.

Though not a privy councillor, Raleigh was present at the consultation, coming up from the country on purpose to sign the letter of welcome to the King. At the same time he declared his opinion, according to Aubrey,¹ that 'Twas the wisest way for them to keep the government in their own hands and set up a commonwealth and not be subject to a needy beggarly nation.'

'It seems there were some of this cabal,' Aubrey continues, 'who kept not this secret but that it came to King James's ear.'

If this story was true it would naturally increase the King's bias, and the antagonism he already entertained toward Sir Walter. James set out and crossed the border into his new kingdom early in April. There was a rush out of London on the part of the nobility and gentry to meet him. So great was the stampede that a proclamation was issued to forbid anyone who had no official right going to the reception of his Majesty, but Raleigh, contrary to Cecil's urgent advice, went, on the plea that he must obtain the royal authority for his administration of the Duchy of Cornwall. The King is said to have greeted the announcement of his name with the

¹Lives of Eminent Men. By John Aubrey.

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maladroit pun, 'Raleigh! On my soul, mon, I have heard rawly of thee.'

The gorgeous display in 'exceeding rich equipage' made by the noblemen who came to flatter and curry favour with James on his entry into England seems to have displeased rather than delighted him. He remarked that if his arrival had been opposed instead of hailed with rejoicing, he did not doubt that he could have asserted his claim by force and have overcome all objections. 'Would to God that had been put to the trial,' Raleigh exclaimed. 'Your Majesty would then have known your friends from your enemies.'

The King interpreted this speech as having a double meaning, and never forgave it. Thus, at the start, personal acquaintance only strengthened the prejudice which had been so carefully fostered by misrepresentation, and Raleigh, indeed, was not kept long in suspense about the King's intentions toward him. Blow after blow fell on him rapidly. In May he was deprived of his rank as Captain of the Guard and of his most profitable source of income in the shape of monopolies, his right to the office of licenser of wines being called in question. His beautiful London home for twenty years, Durham House, with 'the prospect as pleasant as any in the world,' was taken away from him and restored to its original owners, the bishops of Durham. The King's warrant to the judges set forth that the law having decided that the persons 'that now dwell in the Bishop of Duresme's house called Duresme Place have no right therein and shall have notice to quit.'

Sir Walter Raleigh

Raleigh had spent £2000 in improving and beautifying the old palace, but was not allowed to remove any fixtures. Though he begged to be allowed to stay on till Michaelmas, he was forced to turn out by midsummer in spite of his protest that 'even a poor artificer is entitled to three months' notice from his landlord.' Poor Raleigh might well speak of himself now as 'mad with intricate affairs and want of means.' He made every endeavour to win his way with the new sovereign, by grovelling flattery and submission, while all the time his proud soul was in revolt. In July he was put under arrest, and Cecil wrote of the event as follows:

'This hath been the cause. First he hath been discontented ever since the King came, and yet for those offices taken from him the King gave him £300 a year for life. Secondly his inwardness or his rather governing Lord Cobham's spirit made great suspicion that in these treasons he had part.'

The 'treasons' here alluded to were the two plots afterward known as the 'Bye' and the 'Main.' It was almost impossible for the most unscrupulous of his accusers to implicate Raleigh in the Bye Plot, which was the outcome of Catholic discontent at the peaceful solution of the succession problem. It is true there were Puritan malcontents too, such as Lord Grey of Wilton, who joined with the priests, Watson and Clarke, and Lord Cobham's brother, George Brooke, Anthony Copley and Sir Griffith Markham in a conspiracy, the object of which was to surprise and seize James and force from him a

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decree of absolute toleration for Roman Catholics. At his trial Raleigh was exonerated from having anything to do with this foolish and clumsily conceived plot, though his friend Lord Cobham must have known of it through his brother George Brooke. It was on his connexion with Cobham, weak-minded and loquacious, who was the chief mover in the 'Main,' that the case trumped up against Raleigh was based. The Main Plot concerned the claim of Arabella Stuart and secret dealings with Spain. Cobham had been engaged in intrigues with Aremberg, the Flemish envoy of the Infanta, and because he was the only man now on intimate terms of friendship with Raleigh, it was concluded that he must have been aware of Cobham's proceedings. George Brooke, while under examination about the Bye Plot, threw out dark hints of the other treasonable transactions, and, after a little pressure, confessed his knowledge of a more important conspiracy. He declared that he confidently thought what his brother knew was 'known to the other,' and that Raleigh had been thought by the conspirators a 'fit man to be of the action.' Brooke, in fact, belonging to both conspiracies, gave every one away, in hopes of being paid for his information. He was an unscrupulous scamp, with a handsome person and plausible manners.

Raleigh, knowing only too well the vagaries of the law at that time with regard to treason, looked neither for justice nor leniency on the part of his judges. He felt keenly the hopelessness of his position. The populace hated him, as did the King, and the nobles, who had always been jealous of him. He

Sir Walter Raleigh

and Cobham were lodged in the Tower, and before he had been tried he was treated as if his treason were proved. He had no choice but to resign his wardenship of the Stanneries and the governorship of Jersey. We have seen that Raleigh's was a temperament prone to be plunged in despair when overtaken by troubles, so it is easy to believe that while awaiting trial in the Tower he made an attempt on his life. The wound, inflicted by a table knife, was slight and he soon recovered. He also recovered his wonderful spirits and energy, and set himself with zeal to the task of defending himself.

Before his arrest, Cobham, in an outburst of passion, had rounded on Raleigh during his examination by the Lords of the Council regarding the Main Plot. He had called him traitor and villain, and sworn that he would never have 'entered into these courses but by the instigation of Raleigh who would never let him alone.' He soon, however, repented the charges he had made against his friend, and was impatient to retract them. In the Tower he was anxious to do anything he could to atone for his hastiness and clear Sir Walter. He asked the governor of the Tower to be allowed to write a letter to the Council withdrawing his accusations. 'God is my witness,' he said; 'it doth touch my conscience.' The governor, Harvey, probably to please Cecil, declined to help him to express his penitence. Soon after Raleigh contrived that an apple containing a letter inside it should be tossed into the window of Cobham's cell in the Wardrobe Tower. It besought Cobham to confess that he had wronged him. The letter which Cobham

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wrote in reply was not to Raleigh's contenting, and he begged earnestly that Cobham would vindicate him more completely at the approaching trial. But the repentant Cobham, eager not to put off but to make amends at once, sent another letter forthwith. This time Raleigh pronounced it 'very good,' as well he might for it contained the following lines:

'I never practised with Spain for your procurement. . . for anything I know you are as innocent and clear from any treason against the King as is subject living.'

Raleigh cherished this letter in his bosom to serve as a refutation at his trial, and started in better hopes to face his accusers.

CHAPTER XVI: *Raleigh's Trial at Winchester, 1603*

THE plague was raging in London that autumn; and King James and his Danish Queen held their court at Winchester Castle, whither the courts of justice were also removed from London. In grey November weather began the unravelling of the intricate 'Bye' and 'Main' conspiracies and the trial of Sir Walter Raleigh. The prisoner went in his own coach, which was stormed on the way with brick-bats and tobacco-pipes hurled ferociously by the mob at the hero of Cadiz, the great adventurer, knight-errant and high favourite of the late Queen, and who, though he seemed cut out for a popular idol, was so strangely hated by the crowd. It was 'touch and go whether Raleigh could be brought alive through such multitudes of unruly people,' wrote one of his keepers. 'It was almost incredible what bitter speeches they, the mob, exclaimed against him as he went along; which general hatred of the people, worse than death to some—he scorned and neglected as from base and rascal people.'

The charge against Raleigh was for plotting with Cobham and Brooke 'to deprive the King of his crown and dignity, to subvert the government and alter the true religion established in England and to levy war against the King.'

In these days such a travesty of justice as his trial would happily be impossible. From beginning to end it was a hollow mockery of the law, and is one of the darkest and most disgraceful blots in

Raleigh's Trial at Winchester

the annals of English jurisprudence. The judges on the Bench, before whom the accused knight defended himself with the most consummate skill and amazing spirit, were Sir John Popham, Lord Chief Justice of England, and Chief Justices Gawdy and Warburton. Associated with these were Lord Thomas Howard, who had been with Raleigh at Cadiz; Lord Mountjoy; the false Cecil; and Raleigh's most bitter enemy, Lord Henry Howard.

Coke, the Attorney-General, a foul-mouthed, abusive scoundrel, opened the prosecution. Raleigh pleaded 'Not Guilty,' and when addressing the jury requested them to remember that he was not so much as charged with the treason called the 'Bye' which Coke made the theme of his opening speech. Lady Arabella Stuart, fair and lovely, was in the court as a looker-on. Lord Cecil, standing at the Council board before the judges, said, 'There hath been touched upon the Lady Arabella Stuart, a near kinswoman of the King. Let us not scandalize the innocent by confusion of speech. She is as innocent of these things as any here, only she received a letter from my Lord Cobham to prepare her for the proceedings of the conspirators which she laughed at and sent to the King. So far was she from being malcontent, that she laughed the conspirator Cobham to scorn.'

The lady in question turned pale and trembled, but whispered something to the Lord High Admiral, who was sitting beside her, whereupon he rose and declared, 'This lady here doth protest upon her salvation that she never dealt in any of these things, and she willeth me to tell the Court.'

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Then Lord Cecil again spoke on the Lady Arabella's behalf, and said that Lord Cobham had sought an interview with her to tell her of people about the King who wanted to disgrace her, but she 'doubted this was but a trick.'

Next, the dare-devil George Brooke avowed that his brother, Lord Cobham, had urged him to get Lady Arabella to write letters to the King of Spain, but he had never got her to do it. Sir Walter Raleigh referred to the lady slightly as a woman 'with whom he had no acquaintance and of all whom he ever saw, he liked her the least.'

Raleigh was described as looking 'grey and sick.' He was baited by the bully Coke, bellowed at, entangled in his speech, called 'viper' and 'traitor,' and had insults heaped upon him. Yet he came through the ordeal magnificently, displaying a 'wit, learning and courage,' which won the admiration of every disinterested spectator. He pointed out that the bald statements of the Attorney-General without proof were not evidence. 'I do not hear that you have spoken one word against me. Here is no treason of mine done. If my Lord Cobham be a traitor, what is that to me?'

'All that he did,' replied Coke, 'was by thy instigation, thou viper! I will prove thee the rankest traitor in all England.'

Whenever Raleigh seemed to be scoring a point, or the Attorney General's tongue failed to find more vituperative epithets, Cecil and Howard put in their word—all the etiquette of a court of justice was outraged. Once Coke shouted at the top of his voice, 'Your intent was to set up the Lady Ara-

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bella as a titular Queen, and to dispose our present rightful King. Your jargon was peace, which meant Spanish invasion and Scottish subversion.' To this Raleigh answered, 'Let me answer—it concerns my life.' 'Thou shalt not,' roared Coke, and Popham bade the prisoner hold his tongue. He was told that he was 'a monster with an English face but a Spanish heart,' and so on. When at last he was given a chance to speak, Raleigh denied emphatically that he had ever entered into any plots with Cobham. As his supposed guilt rested alone on Lord Cobham's word, he begged to be confronted with him, but this was refused. He swore that he had been the life-long enemy of Spain. Would he then be so mad, he asked, knowing how poor, impotent and bankrupt Spain was and the present powerful state of England, united with Scotland under one King, as to play Jack Cade now at Spain's bidding and dance while she pulled the strings. He explained his frequent meetings with Cobham as connected with private affairs. 'But for my knowing that he had conspired these things with Spain for Arabella against the King I protest before Almighty God I am as clear as whosoever here is freest.'

If he, Cobham, the accused continued, came forward and on his honour said that he had been set up by him to engage in treasonable plots in the interest of Spain, he would submit to be dealt with as the King willed. Raleigh said this, confidently relying on that letter of recantation which Cobham had written to him in the Tower, which was to be his trump card against his accusers. Yet before he could produce it and prove that Cobham had, in his

Sir Walter Raleigh

own handwriting, absolved him from blame, Coke out-trumped Raleigh by reading another letter from Cobham in which the poor, weak turn-coat had purchased favour by recalling his recantation. Triumphantly the Attorney-General sprung it on the prisoner, reading it aloud to the court. 'I have thought fit in duty to my Sovereign and in discharge of my conscience,' it began, 'to set this down to your Lordships, wherein I protest upon my soul to write nothing but what is true.'

He goes on to say that 'this is no time to dissemble with God,' and tells how Raleigh had besought him to absolve him in the letter which he wrote from his cell in the Tower, that the truth was that Raleigh had suggested to him to obtain through Count Aremberg a pension of £1500 a year from Spain to pay spies to report on all that passed in England. He blames Raleigh for everything that has befallen him, and gives an account of the incident of the apple being thrown in at his window.

For a moment the revelation of Cobham's perfidy upset the prisoner's equilibrium. He stood utterly overwhelmed and 'much amazed.' But he rallied and soon gathered his spirits again sufficiently to continue his brilliant defence. He produced Cobham's letter, and Cecil consented to read it aloud. It was difficult to decide when the pitiable, perjured creature had lied and when he had spoken the truth. He had contradicted himself so often. But judges and jury made it a foregone conclusion that when Cobham's evidence was against Raleigh it was the truth, and he was found guilty.

Before the verdict was given, Raleigh again pro-

Raleigh's Trial at Winchester

tested vainly with impassioned vigour that Cobham was false. He again solemnly affirmed that he was innocent of intrigues with Spain, that he knew nothing of the plot with regard to Arabella Stuart, that he was ignorant of Cobham's dealings with Aremberg. Sentence of death was passed by the judge, Popham, and in language more coarse and undignified than even Coke's had been, and the disgraceful scene came to an end.

One who was present at the trial has recorded thus Raleigh's part in it. 'He did as much as wit of man could devise to clear himself. Sir Walter Raleigh served for a whole act and played all the parts himself. He answered with that wit, learning, courage and judgment that, save it went with the hazard of his life, it was the happiest day that he had ever spent; and so well he shifted all advantages that were taken against him that were not an ill name half-hanged in the opinion of all men, he would have been acquitted.'

The impression produced on two impartial observers by Raleigh's eloquent defence was further given in a report to the King. One said that 'Never man spoke so well in times past, nor would do in the times to come.' The other's testimony was still more striking, for he declared 'that whereas when he first saw Sir Walter he would have gone a hundred miles to see him hanged he was so led by the common hatred, he would ere they parted have gone a thousand to save his life.'

Even the common people among the audience were equally impressed by the pluck of the man they had detested, and often hissed Coke's brutal attacks.

Sir Walter Raleigh

The French Ambassador, Beaumont, probably voiced the general opinion when he said Raleigh was guilty, but had been unlawfully sentenced. After all if everything with which he was formally charged had been proved he would not have been guilty of treason. For, listening to Cobham's schemes for getting money from Spain, and having demanded a pension in reward for the disclosure of State secrets was not a treasonable offence. Many of his distinguished contemporaries in the last reign had been pensioners of Spain, and seen no harm in it. Cobham's kinsman, Sir Edward Stafford, the English Ambassador in Paris, had sold secrets to Spain before the Armada. The selfrighteous Cecil himself had been in the pay of Spain, and Northumberland in that of France. Such was the lax political morality of the times—the 'spacious' times of great Elizabeth.

The whole fabric of Raleigh's supposed guilt was built on the shifty word of Cobham, well hit off by Raleigh's description of him as a 'base, dishonourable poor soul.' A structure of lies reared on so unstable a foundation is easily dispersed by the truth of history, and no one believes to-day that there was ever the faintest shadow of evidence to support the theory of Raleigh's guilt. On his way to his trial, hooted and jeered at by the multitude, who would have liked to tear him to pieces, when he came out convicted of treason and condemned to death, Raleigh became all at once an object of universal sympathy and admiration. Then it was that the fickle mob reared him to his niche in the Valhalla of our heroes, from which he has never since fallen.

CHAPTER XVII: *The Reprieve*

THE ringleader of the 'Bye,' George Brooke, who was also steeped in the conspiracy of the 'Main,' was beheaded in the following December at Winchester, meeting his death with the same airy nonchalance as he had lived. The unfortunate priests, Watson and Clarke, were drawn and quartered, and their remains exhibited to the public view on the city gates.

But the King was advised on all sides not to begin his reign with wholesale bloodshed, so the sentence on the other prisoners was commuted at the last minute. The Queen was specially urgent in petitioning that Raleigh's life should be spared. The Spanish Ambassador (the first there had been for twenty years) also joined his voice to hers in pleading for clemency on behalf of the condemned conspirators.

James at first affected to be deaf to all entreaties for mercy. All the same he was not a man of blood and iron, and had no intention really of the sentence of death being carried out. He could not resist indulging in a characteristic surprise trick, however, and signed the death warrants at Wilton, where he and his court were being entertained by the Earl of Pembroke, as the plague still raged in London. Those who were to have suffered first—Markham, Lord Grey, and Cobham—were, one by one, led forth to the scaffold, and Raleigh watched them from his prison window through a veil of silvery rain.

Sir Walter Raleigh

Markham, it was said, looked sad and heavy, the very picture of sorrow, though he bore himself resolutely; Lord Grey, staunch in his puritanism, was full of dignity and bade his friends a cheerful farewell. Cobham appeared as ready to die as the rest, and his brave front on the scaffold was a contrast to his wavering poltroonery during his first imprisonment and at the trial. He declared 'that what he had said of Sir Walter was true as he hoped for his soul's resurrection,' but it was not clear to which statement he referred, for he had said so many contradictory things that all could not be true.

And as they had, one by one, been led forth, so Raleigh saw the prisoners, one by one, removed from the place of execution. Next he heard them being harangued by the Sheriff, and then it must have dawned on him, though he was too far off to hear distinctly what was said, that his fellow-prisoners were not to be executed. Soon afterward the news of his own reprieve was brought to him.

The man who had faced death a hundred times with splendid courage, who had fearlessly run the gauntlet of rebel spears and ambushes in Ireland, was not above praying for his life as abjectly as any craven. While he lay under sentence of death, Raleigh's conduct was indeed marked by a cowardice for which all who admire him most must feel regret, if not shame. He humiliated himself to the dust to beg for his life in letters of exhortation to the Lords of the Council, to Cecil and to James. In these humble supplications Lady Raleigh joined, casting dignity and pride to the winds. They absolutely grovelled, so that Raleigh, a little later, seems

The Reprieve

to have been disgusted at his own self-abasement, for he instructed his wife to secure, if possible, the letters in which he had sued for his life to the Lords. 'God knows,' he wrote, 'that it was for you and yours that I desired it. But it is true that I disdain myself for begging it.' The letter was written when death seemed inevitable, and is expressed in that exquisite and pathetic English of which Raleigh was a supreme master. It shows the noblest side of his versatile character, even as the letters he himself thought of 'with disdain' show the basest. 'You shall receive, dear wife, my last words in these my last lines. My love I send you that you may keep it when I am dead and my counsel that you may remember it when I am no more. I would not with my last will present you with sorrows, dear Bess. Let them go to the grave with me and be buried in the dust . . . and seeing it is not the will of God that I shall ever see you in this life, bear my destruction gently and with a heart like yourself. First I send you all the thanks my heart can conceive or my pen express for your many troubles and cares taken for me which—though they have not taken effect as you wished—yet my debt is to you nevertheless, but pay it I never shall in this world.' Then he begs her not to mourn too long, suggests her marrying again, and deplores 'that he leaves her and his boy so badly off. 'Remember your poor child,' he goes on, 'for his father's sake that comforted you and loved you in his happiest time, and know it, dear wife, that your son is the child of a true man, who in his own respect despiseth death and all his misshapen and ugly forms. I cannot write much. God

Sir Walter Raleigh

knows how hardly I stole this time when all sleep, and it is time to separate my thoughts from the world. Beg my dead body which living was denied you. . . . I can write no more. Time and death call me away. . . . My true wife, farewell. Bless my poor boy, pray for me. My true God hold you both in his arms. Written with the dying hand of sometime thy husband, but now alas overthrowne. Yours that was, but now not my own

W. RALEIGH.'

Very different from this touching epistle were the cringing and flattering letters which Raleigh addressed to his 'Most Dread Sovereign.' He protested before him and the 'Everlasting God' that he never invented treason, consented to treason, nor performed treason. 'I do therefore on the knees of my heart, beseech your Majesty's great compassion to take counsel from your own sweet and merciful disposition and to remember that I have loved your Majesty now twenty years for which your Majesty have yet given me no reward. . . . Save me, therefore, most merciful Prince that I may owe to your Majesty my life itself, than which there cannot be a greater debt. Send it to me at least, my Sovereign Lord, that I may pay it again for your service when your Majesty shall please. If the law destroy me your Majesty shall put me out of your power and I shall have then none to fear, none to reverence but the King of Kings. . . .'

Thus did the once haughty favourite of England's Elizabeth humble himself and fawn at the feet of her ignoble and unworthy successor.

Less than a week after the painful drama enacted

The Reprieve

on the scaffold at Winchester, Raleigh and his fellow-conspirators were brought to London and lodged first in the Tower and then in the Fleet and then again in the Tower, till finally Raleigh was settled with his wife and child in a suite of rooms in the Bloody Tower, where he was not badly off for accommodation. Here he began to concentrate his mind on how best to provide for the future of his wife and little son. Though he was reprieved he was not pardoned, and was beggared of 'all his vast emoluments and wealth.' He had sold his estates in Ireland long before to the Earl of Cork, but his beloved Sherborne was still left, and he hoped it might escape confiscation. It was in the hands of royal commissioners, and greedy agents were plundering everything they could grasp.

His patent for the licensing of wines had passed to the Earl of Nottingham, the new title of the Lord Admiral Howard, and all his offices were forfeited. Yet he strove hard to save the ashes of his fortune. His wife bravely struggled to help, with the co-operation of Cecil who, now that there was no longer cause to fear Raleigh's rivalry in the esteem of the new sovereign, had partly resumed his earlier friendly relations with him. By his intervention the interests of Lady Raleigh and her son in Sherborne were safe-guarded, and the estates conveyed for sixty years in trust for them. But through some flaw in the deed of conveyance, which had been drawn up in 1602, it was declared void. The property on which Raleigh had lavished so much care and a small fortune was ultimately bestowed on the infamous Carr, James's handsome and unworthy

Sir Walter Raleigh

favourite. It was in vain that Lady Raleigh prostrated herself at the feet of the King and implored to have her home and hearth spared. The only answer she got was 'Na! Na! I maun hae the land. I maun hae it for Carr.' For this cultivated monarch, who was versed in the classics and could, if he like, converse in Latin and Greek, always used the broadest Scotch vernacular in everyday conversation.

It is to be regretted that Raleigh should have degraded himself to plead for his estates to such a despicable creature as Carr. He wrote to him in his most pathetic vein, telling him that after 'many great losses and many years of sorrow . . . it comes to my knowledge that yourself have been persuaded to give me and mine our last fatal blow, by obtaining from His Majesty the inheritance of my children and nephews lost in law. This done there remaineth nothing with me but the bare name of life, despoiled of all else but the grief and sorrow thereof—and for yourself, sir, seeing your day is but now in dawn and mine come to the evening, your own virtues and the King's grace assuring you of many good fortunes and much honour, I beseech you not to begin your first buildings upon the ruins of the innocent.'

Carr got Sherborne, but it did not prosper in his hands, and changed ownership eight times in as many years. Before its former owner came out of the Tower, the Earl of Somerset (the title given to the upstart Carr) had entered it in disgrace, a far more merited disgrace than Raleigh's.

Lady Raleigh, in consideration of her interest in

The Reprieve

the estate, was granted £8000, which, though it was not all paid, saved her and the family from absolute penury. Thus they settled down to twelve long years of captivity. But the indomitable spirit of Raleigh was never quenched. He chafed against the bars of his prison like a snared eagle; his hair grew white as snow, and his turbulent pulse became sluggish, his body numb from damp and agues; yet his wonderful mind suffered no eclipse, and his intellect, brilliant as a cut diamond, flashed forth brighter rays than ever.

CHAPTER XVIII: *The Eagle in his Cage*

THERE must have been a sort of cynical generosity in Raleigh's attitude toward those who had injured him, otherwise it is hardly credible that he would have liked to use Cecil (by this time Lord Salisbury) as the medium for his constant petitions and begging of favours.

No sooner had his life been spared than he was beseeching for fresh concessions with eloquent insistence. Very little came of his requests, yet he did not reproach Cecil, and appears to have really retained personal affection for the crooked little man who had served him so ill and helped in his ruin more than anyone else. Cecil told Lady Raleigh decisively that 'as for a pardon it could not be done,' but still Sir Walter continued to beg without ceasing, not only for his liberty, but for more luxuries and consideration in the Tower and for the preservation of his property.

Nevertheless, for the next twelve years he was to be kept in confinement, languishing in health if not in mind, never abandoning hope of one day retrieving his fortunes.

Once only during these twelve years he enjoyed a temporary change of air to the Fleet on the occasion of Royalty visiting the Tower to witness the odious, but then not unusual, spectacle of a lion being worried to death by two mastiffs.

His apartments in the Bloody, or Garden, Tower were sufficiently spacious to accommodate his wife and their children (the second boy, Carew, being

The Eagle in his Cage

born soon after they came) and their staff of servants. The terrace overlooking the river and wharf was his recreation ground, and his friends and relations were allowed to come and see him, bringing him books and tidings of the outside world. But the place was damp, being so close to the Thames and the stagnant water of the moat. Even during the first years of his imprisonment Raleigh complained that the confined air was killing him, and that his boy had 'lain these fourteen days next door to a woman sick of the plague whose child had died of it.' In 1606 damp and cold had told on him so much that his doctor gave an alarming report of his health. He was in daily danger of death, one side of him was numb, his fingers deformed with rheumatism, and even his tongue affected so that it was feared he might lose his power of speech.

This brought about the change in his lodging which his own prayers had failed to accomplish. Leave was granted him to build a little room adjacent to the outhouse in the garden, which he had already used as a laboratory. Here was now his sleeping chamber, and things improved. The fascination of his personality was not without effect on his governors. Both Sir John Peyton and Sir George Harvey, his successor as Lieutenant of the Tower, did all they could to make his captivity less irksome. Sir George frequently invited him to dinner and allowed him the run of his private garden and encouraged him in his chemical experiments. Thus within the walls of his prison Raleigh found an outlet for his boundless energy, and increased his fame for posterity by his literary labours.

Sir Walter Raleigh

Among his servants, who lodged near him and were in constant attendance on him, were those swarthy Indians whom he had brought from Guiana—picturesque figures with their feathers and beads adding colour and romance within that abode of sighs and groans, shattered hopes and blighted lives. They no doubt helped in the mixing and brewing of the Grand Cordial, the balsam of Guiana, which gained much reputation as a miraculous cure of every possible disease, though more than one patient is said to have died from the effects of it. The Countess of Beaumont, when she came to the Tower to see the lions, begged, as she passed the great human ‘lion’ in the Tower Garden, that he would give her some of the balsam, and this lady does not appear to have been any the worse for it.

The time that Raleigh did not spend among his jars and phials making chemical and mineralogical experiments, or, quill in hand, writing *The History of the World*, was mostly passed parading the terrace, to the delight of crowds on the wharf, who came from far and near to look at him. Aubrey tells us that he was dressed usually in a ‘velvet cap laced, a rich gown and trunk hose,’ and glowered fiercely on his old foes. But the feelings of the mob toward Raleigh had undergone a change and were no longer antagonistic. Indeed, they regarded him as a celebrity whom it was worth coming miles to see. In his misfortune he had become almost a popular hero.

On the appointment of Sir William Ward to the Governorship of the Tower, Raleigh’s showing himself to the people was regarded with suspicion. A

The Eagle in his Cage

brick wall was built in front of the Bloody Tower, and Ward complained to Cecil, 'Sir Walter Raleigh doth show himself upon the wall of his garden to the view of the people who gaze upon him and he stareth upon them, which he doeth in his cunning humour.' Under Ward's governorship irritating restrictions were imposed on the distinguished prisoners, and Lady Raleigh was forbidden to drive her coach through the courtyard. Raleigh himself was perpetually under surveillance, and often brought before the Council to be cross-examined. He was thought to have had some knowledge of the Gunpowder Plot, and indeed he was suspected of complicity in every plot that was going just then, and once, for no apparent reason, he was more closely imprisoned for three months and separated from his wife, who, for the time being, was dismissed from the Tower.

Yet Raleigh's fame grew in prison. Even in the days of his glittering splendour he had never been more talked of. He was regarded almost as a magician, and his Grand Cordial was begged for from all parts of Europe. This concoction consisted of forty different herbs, roots and seeds, besides other things, macerated in spirits of wine and distilled; then it was combined with powdered bezoar, stones, pearls, red coral, deer's horn, ambergris, musk, antimony and various sorts of earth and white sugar. The Queen, Anne of Denmark, partook of the mixture when she was ill, and the fact that it did her good instead of killing her shows that she must have had a strong constitution.

This Queen was full of sentiment and romance, and she was captivated by the glamour that hung

Sir Walter Raleigh

over the King's victim in the Tower, and never wearied of interceding for him and urging the hero's release. And in her young son, 'the hopeful Prince Henry,' Raleigh had another champion against the malignant tyranny and injustice of the King.

The nation had never built higher hopes on any heir to the throne than on this boy, who promised, like the chivalrous Black Prince and like the Prince Arthur of later times, to be a wise and enlightened sovereign when his turn should come to reign, but who was cut off in the promise of his youth before that turn came.

Henry, Prince of Wales, noble, generous and tolerant, had convinced himself that Raleigh had been wrongly condemned. After weighing all the evidence for and against him and following his trial with the keenest intelligence, he joined with his mother in sparing no efforts to get him released. He sat at the feet of the great prisoner, hung on his lips and believed in him as in an oracle of wisdom and learning. He sometimes expressed himself with hot indignation about his father's treatment of his most illustrious subject,¹ and was determined that he would not allow himself and his sister to be married off to a daughter and son of the Spanish and Catholic Duke of Savoy without seeking Raleigh's counsel. Thus the prisoner, lost as he was to the world, was given an opportunity of asserting indirectly his authority in public affairs and showing that his old animus against Spain was still alive. He penned two masterly treatises for the young

¹ 'No king but my father would keep such a bird in a cage,' he is reported to have said.

The Eagle in his Cage

Prince's guidance, full of hostility to the idea of the proposed Spanish marriages, and advocating the alliance of Princess Elizabeth with the Protestant Prince Palatine, Frederic.

It was a risky attitude to take up, being in exact opposition to the King's view, but probably by this time Raleigh had given up expecting any favour from the King and based all his hopes on the heir to the throne. The Prince further consulted him on shipbuilding and Sir Walter produced for his instruction 'The discourse of the invention of ships, observations concerning the Royal Navy and sea service,' with which the Prince was delighted.

Undaunted by the ill-success of his efforts to secure Raleigh's release, Prince Henry next attempted to get the Sherborne estates taken away from Carr and restored to Raleigh. He prevailed on his father indeed to buy them back for £20,000 and grant them to himself, but before he could convey the estate to his mentor he was taken ill with the fever of which he died.

Six months before Cecil's death had occurred, and if Raleigh made no pretence of lamenting it, or of respecting the memory of the man who had been the chief worker of his ruin, the removal of Lord Salisbury from the scene meant that a vague hope of gaining his liberty through his false friend's influence was gone. But the young Prince's death was a far more serious loss not only to Raleigh's hopes, but to those of the whole nation.

The life of the well-beloved Prince was hanging on a thread when one mild November evening there appeared above the gables and housetops of the

Sir Walter Raleigh

city a lunar rainbow in the grey sky, said to be an omen of evil. This sign in the heavens convinced the people that the Prince, whose forwardness in wisdom had so won their love and esteem, could not recover. The augury proved a true one, for though Sir Walter Raleigh, at the heart-broken Queen's request, mixed a special dose of the Grand Cordial and sent it to the dying boy, he only slightly rallied, and passed away that night. There were rumours of poison, obviously without foundation. But the Queen's faith in Raleigh was implicit, and he had told her that his remedy was proof against everything except poison, so when her son died she came to the conclusion that he had been poisoned.

For Raleigh the life of the Prince was of supreme importance, and his death an unspeakable blow. His son had wrung from the King a promise that Raleigh was to be pardoned and set at liberty before the coming Christmas, but his dying before that date ended all prospects of freedom, at any rate for several years to come. More closely than ever were the mighty gates of the Tower closed on him and his fellow-prisoners, among whom were Hariot the mathematician; Sir Thomas Overbury, there to meet a tragic fate; poor, vacillating, weak-minded Cobham; the Earl of Northumberland, full of gallantry and learning; and fair Arabella Stuart, the most pitiful figure of all that hapless company, rousing the dismal echoes with her weeping and mad laughter.

CHAPTER XIX: '*The History of the World*'

IT was well for posterity that Sir Walter Raleigh employed the time that hung heavy on his hands in the Tower in more ways besides dabbling in chemistry and brewing cordials. To his imprisonment we owe the colossal fragment of his *History of the World*, which is such a valuable contribution to English literature.¹ Vast in conception, the whole had been discussed in detail with Prince Henry, and was to have been dedicated to him when finished. The author ends the first part with an eloquent eulogy of his young patron, who, if he had lived to succeed his father, would have raised Raleigh again to a position of prosperity and grandeur.

The story goes that the bookseller who published the first edition in 1614 told Raleigh that he should be a loser by it, whereupon Sir Walter, in a passion, said that 'since the world did not understand it, they should not have his second part, which he took and threw into the fire, and burnt before his face.' But it is more likely that this relates to other treatises and manuscripts which he is known to have written about the same period. The *History*, as far

¹ Oliver Cromwell recommended it to his son Richard. Hampden was its zealous student and admirer. Nonconformists and Puritans vied with churchmen and cavaliers in extolling it. Montrose read it greedily as a boy and was inspired by its great deeds and records of past heroes. The 1614 edition was found in the knapsack of the Queen of Hearts, Princess Elizabeth, when her luggage was captured at Prague by the Spaniards in 1620, showing that Raleigh's *History of the World* had been her travelling companion.

Sir Walter Raleigh

as it goes, is one of the three greatest works of genius produced in prison, the other two being *Don Quixote*, and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*.

The writer acknowledges in his preface the stupendous magnitude of the undertaking attempted in the evening of a tempestuous life (he was 59 when he began the work), and then gives a preliminary review of his subject, which he sets forth in graceful and dignified style. He depicts history as a whole, beginning with the creation, giving illustrations, from the times of Pharaoh down to those of the Tudors, to show God's judgments on kings and the retribution which follows bloodshed. The whole of the preface enforces the lesson of the responsibility of rulers, and attacks the principle of the Divinity of Monarchs, for which James lived to promulgate and for which his son, Charles Stuart, lost his head. Raleigh holds up to reprobation Henry VII and Henry VIII as cruel monsters; throughout he is down on the tyranny of kings, and shows how Divine Justice is meted out in the end to the most powerful and exalted who have treated the people cruelly and unfairly. And yet he interlards his criticism of James's Tudor forerunners with the grossest flattery of the reigning boor, declaring that he exceeds by many degrees all who have gone before him, in divine as well as human understanding. Nevertheless, James took personal umbrage at the thrusts at monarchy, and condemned the book as being 'too saucy in the censuring of princes.'

In spite of pointing out that the supreme end of good government must be the happiness of the

The History of the World

governed, Raleigh does not conceal his detestation of democracy, or what was then understood by democracy. In this respect he was the super-man who despises and mistrusts the common herd. He compares the populace with 'barking dogs,' and avers that there is nothing in any state so terrible as 'a powerful and authorised ignorance.'

He never swerved from his ideal that the chosen few of a strong and powerful race were privileged to govern the many according to their own standard of righteousness to promote the well-being of all. He could be gracious to those beneath him as long as they were absolutely submissive to his will, and was a kind master to his servants, especially to the Indians, who venerated and adored him, but politically he scorned and hated the 'common people.'

Among his fellow-prisoners were scholars who doubtless rendered Raleigh valuable assistance in his work. There was Hariot, who had been his right hand in brighter days at Durham House; there was Serjeant Hoskins, the man of letters, poet and polished stylist; the scholarly and cultured Northumberland, and others. Ben Jonson, from without the prison walls, contributed the introductory verses, but for all this the work is wholly and characteristically Raleigh's. It is full of little sidelights on his own personal history. It has here and there the wit and charm and apt allusion which are the salt of history and make the 'driest bones' alive.

He must have known himself that he could never live to finish the work on the gigantic scale he had planned. The first six books, beginning with the creation, only get as far as the second Macedonian

Sir Walter Raleigh

War, and it was impossible that he could ever have written a history of the whole world down to his own day at such detailed length—still it is and will ever remain a work of gorgeous promise and of more significance in its majestic design than many a finished masterpiece. The following passages are a handful of treasure gathered at random from its pages:

‘For myself if conscience have in anything served my country and prized it before my private, the general acceptation can yield me no other profit at this time than doth a fair sunshine day to a seaman after shipwreck, and the contrary no other harm than an outrageous tempest after the port attained. I know that I lost the love of many for my fidelity towards her (Queen Elizabeth) whom I must still honour in the dust . . . of those that did it and by what device they did it. He that is the Supreme Judge of all the world hath taken the account. So that of this kind of suffering I must say with Seneca, *Malo opino bene parta delectat*. So for other men, if there be any that have made themselves fathers of that fame which have been begotten of them, I can neither envy such their purchased glory, nor much lament my own mishap in that kind, but content myself to say with Virgil, *Sic vos non vobes* in many particulars.

AMBITION AND GLORY

‘If we seek a reason of the succession and continuance of the boundless ambition in mortal men, we may add that the kings and princes of the world have always laid before them the actions but not the ends of those great ones which preceded

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them. They are always transported with the glory of the one, but they never mind the misery of the other till they find the experience in themselves. They neglect the advice of God while they enjoy life or hope: but they follow the counsel of Death upon his first approach.¹

FAME

‘To these undertakings the greatest Lords of the world have been stirred up rather by the desire of fame, which plougheth up the air and soweth in the winds, than by the affection of bearing rule, which draweth after it so much vexation and so many cares, and that this is true the good advice of Cineas to Pyrrhus proves. And certainly as fame hath often been dangerous to the living, so is it to the dead no good at all because separate from knowledge. Which, were it obtained, and the extreme ill bargain of buying this lasting discourse understood by them which are dissolved, they themselves would then rather have wished to have stolen out of the world without noise than to be put in mind that they have purchased the report of their actions in the world by rapine, oppression and cruelty, by giving in spoil the innocent and labouring soul to the idle and insolent, and by having emptied the cities of the world of their ancient inhabitants and filled them again with so many and so variable sorrows.

GREAT MEN

‘There are some things else, you will say, and of greater regard than gathering of riches, such as the

¹History of the World, Bk., V. ch. vi.

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reverend respect that is held of great men and the honour done unto him by all sorts of people. And it is true indeed provided that an inward love for their justice and piety accompany the outward worship given to their places and power, without which what is the applause of the multitude but as the outcry of a herd of animals, who, without the knowledge of any true cause, please themselves with the noise they make, for seeing it is a thing exceeding rare to distinguish virtue and fortune, the most impious if prosperous have ever been applauded, the most virtuous if unprosperous have ever been despised.

GOD

‘There is not anything in this world of more efficacy and force to allure and draw to it the hearts of men than God which is the *summum bonum*. He is carefully desired and continually sought for of all creatures, for all regard Him as their last end and refuge. Light things apply themselves upwards, heavy things downwards, the heavens to revolution, the herbs to flowers, trees to bear fruit, beasts to preserve their kind, and man to seeking his tranquility and everlasting glory. But inasmuch as God is of so high a nature that the sense of and understanding of man cannot concern it, every man directly turns himself to that place where He leaves some print of this power and declares some sign of His existence and to such persons to whom he seemeth more especially to have revealed Himself.

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‘God Whom the wisest men acknowledge to be a Power ineffable and virtue infinite; an Understanding which itself can only comprehend; an essence eternal and spiritual of absolute pureness and simplicity; was and is pleased to make Himself known by the work of the world in the wonderful magnitude whereof (all which he embraceth, filleth and sustaineth) we behold the image of that glory which cannot be measured, and withal that One and yet universal Nature which cannot be defined. In the glorious lights of heaven we perceive a shadow of His Divine Countenance, in His merciful provision for all that live, His manifold goodness, and lastly, in creating and making existent the world universal by the absolute art of his own word. His power and Almightyness which power, light, virtue, wisdom, and goodness being all but attributes of One simple essence and One God we in all admire and in part discern, in the disposition, order and variety of celestial and terrestrial bodies, terrestrial in their strange and manifold diversities, celestial in their beauty and magnitude which in their continual and contrary motions are neither repugnant, intermixed nor confounded. By these potent effects we approach to the knowledge of the Omnipotent Cause and by these motions their Almighty Ruler.’

CHAPTER XX: *Raleigh* *Released*

THROUGH all his manifold misfortunes, disappointments and sorrow, Raleigh never lost sight of the one great inspiration of his life. The colonial expansion and ascendancy of England over-seas was always nearest his heart, a dream that he dreamed as ceaselessly in prison as he had done when he was at liberty to try and put it into execution.

The thought of past failures had no power to lessen his ambition. His faith in the sources of potential wealth which might accrue to the British Empire through the colonization of Virginia and Guiana remained unshaken. So long ago as his return from Cadiz news had reached him that the Indians on the coast of Guiana had been inquiring pathetically why the great White Chief, who had promised to protect them against the Spaniards, did not come back. In prison he heard that the Spanish invaders were busy endeavouring to establish a colony on the Orinoco, where they intended to build an extensive city to serve as their head-quarters when sending out reconnoitring expeditions to Guiana—Raleigh's land of golden promise. Moved by these rumours, Raleigh renewed his desperate appeals to those in authority to prevent Spain stealing a march on England on the other side of the Atlantic. He had managed to enlist Prince Henry's interest in the Virginian plantation, and a new Charter had been granted in 1609 to the 'Company of Adventurers and Planters of the Colony

Raleigh Released

of Virginia,' which led to the establishment of a permanent English settlement in North America. Raleigh in prison reaped no benefit therefrom save the lasting posthumous honour of having converted the great northern continent into an English-speaking country. Thus the idea that he had upheld for thirty years, in the teeth of opposition and reverses, triumphed, the idea that the continent of America was by 'God's providence reserved for England.'

With regard to Guiana gold was to be the magnet to draw money from capitalists; the prospect of getting rich quickly was to be the bait. Raleigh, in 1611, earnestly besought the Queen to give her patronage to an expedition and to use her influence with King James to get him released so that he might conduct it in person. But although Winwood, the secretary who had succeeded Cecil, was favourable to the scheme, it came to nothing. Over and over again he periodically entreated, only to be each time refused. Even when he abandoned the notion of going himself, and offered to send Kemys as his deputy, he failed to obtain leave or sufficient support for a large undertaking. Small expeditions he managed to dispatch, and these kept Guiana from being forgotten by the public. The stories of chiefs who glittered from head to foot with gold dust; of Manoa, the magic city, not yet discovered; of mountains shining with gems, were still circulated to inflame the imagination and excite the greed of Raleigh's fellow-countrymen. And at last those in high places became infected with the germs of the gold fever which the grand old adventurer cultivated so assiduously within the walls of his prison. George

Sir Walter Raleigh

Villiers, afterward Duke of Buckingham, a new and more splendid favourite than the infamous Carr (who with his lady and fellow-worker in wickedness, were now prisoners too in the Tower), enthralled with the prospect of acquiring fabulous and undreamed of riches, accepted a bribe to back the enterprise.

Seven hundred and fifty pounds in hard cash bought the influence of such inestimable importance to Raleigh, and in 1615 Villiers and his party set to work to pick the lock of Raleigh's prison. The favourite obtained a warrant from the King, dated March 19th, which permitted the illustrious prisoner to go abroad to make preparations for his voyage.

Then the doors of his prison swung back and, after twelve years, Raleigh, grey-haired and broken down in body, was a free though not a pardoned man. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the eyes of Europe were fixed on that bent and courageous figure as it emerged from the shadows of the Tower into the broad light of day. Spain knew that her bitterest enemy was again at large; France saw in him a friend worth winning; and smaller States, such as Denmark and Savoy, had their own reasons for regarding with interest the liberated prisoner who was a force to be reckoned with. So the man who had been the victim of Cecil's jealousy, Howard's diabolical hate, and King James's cowardice, stepped out of his prison.

It is possible to imagine his feelings as he took a tour of the town that he had not seen for twelve years, and perhaps noted some changes and enjoyed the old familiar sights.

Raleigh Released

How he must have enjoyed the keen March winds blowing invigoratingly on his brow aching from over-study and thought; how good once more to stretch his limbs, stiff from long confinement, in swift walks through London's merry streets and along the river banks. He must have wondered at the growth and increased beauty of the capital; at the Banqueting Hall which Inigo Jones had put up in Whitehall (as it stands to-day); at the new front in the Strand to his old palace, Durham House. Architecturally speaking, London was at its zenith in those early Stuart days, with its vistas of gables and gardens and stately towers and spires.

Dress then was beautiful too, the simplest citizen in his russet fustian being as artistically clad as the lords of the land in their velvet doublets and ruffs of fine lace. Sir Walter, no doubt, was arrayed in all his wonted bravery¹ of pearl-hatbands, blazing jewels, silk slashing and trunk hose when he took his first walk abroad in the bright chill sunlight of March after his long sojourn among the shadows and gloomy associations of the Tower.

Scarcely a week after he had left it he was engrossed in preparations for the coming voyage and superintending the building of a ship, aptly named 'Destiny.'

¹ When he was arrested in 1603, he was carrying £4000 in jewels on his bosom. When again in 1618 he was taken prisoner his pockets were found full of the diamonds and jacinths which he had wrenched off his person. His letters abound with testimony of his passion for jewels, velvets and emdroidered damasks.

CHAPTER XXI: *Guiana* *Again*

RALEIGH had always been rather a gambler and he now cheerfully staked every penny of his own and his wife's wrecked fortunes on his last great venture.

Afterward he himself marvelled that he could have gone in search of a chimera with such blind confidence of success. The mine on the Orinoco which was to make everyone concerned in the Guiana expedition rich, had never been seen by Raleigh, but it was believed that Kemys had been shown it by an Indian potentate years before. Yet on the possible existence of this mine Raleigh readily risked everything. His enthusiasm and zeal became contagious. Youths of rank and men of distinction volunteered to accompany him in large numbers. But unhappily the majority of his followers were not made of the right stuff to bear great hardships gallantly and to go forward with unflinching purpose to their goal—'drunkards and blasphemers,' so they were described to be for the most part, and their relatives at home were glad to be rid of them.¹

¹ 'What wonder is it that I failed, being followed by a company of volunteers who for the most part had neither seen the sea nor the wars, who, some forty gentlemen excepted, were the very *scum of the world*. Drunkards and Blasphemers and such others as their friends, fathers and brothers thought it an exceeding good gain to be discharged of them with the hazard of some 45 or 50 pounds, knowing they could not have lived a whole year so cheap at home.'—SIR WALTER RALEIGH in his *Apology for the Second Voyage to Guiana*.

Guiana Again

It must be understood that one of the greatest changes that had taken place during Raleigh's twelve years of imprisonment was the change in the relations between England and Spain. Elizabeth had proudly disdained Spanish patronage in her early days when the nation was divided and her throne uncertain. When her position became assured, and with the help of her ministers—so wisely chosen—and her navy, she had made England the most powerful and respected of nations, she could afford to snap her fingers at the much vaunted power of Spain. But James's one desire was to be at peace with his predecessor's old enemy; and Raleigh, on coming out of the Tower, found that truckling to Spain was the order of the day. The Spanish Ambassador, Diego Sarmiento, Count of Gondomar, was a *persona grata* at the court, which was now forbidden ground to Raleigh. Thus Gondomar was admitted to the King's Privy Council, and even to his private chamber, a mark of intimacy shown to a Spaniard unheard of before, and one calculated to horrify those who approved of Queen Elizabeth's policy.

No wonder that the Spanish Ambassador, enjoying in such full measure the confidence of James, found it no difficult matter to learn from him the whole programme that Raleigh had drawn up of his scheme and laid before His Majesty, who had given his word of honour that it should be kept secret. Gondomar was not the ordinary Spanish grandee, but a man whose diplomacy was so deep and cunning that he could play the coarse buffoon to pander to the monarch's taste for coarseness,

Sir Walter Raleigh

while all the time he was hoodwinking him and getting the King to play into his hands. Gondomar kept vigilant watch on all Raleigh's preparations. One month after the latter's release in April 1616, he begged for leave of absence, in order to go back to Spain to confer with King Philip in person on English affairs, especially on 'the formation of another company for Guiana and the River Orinoco and the prime promoter and originator of which is Sir Walter Raleigh, a great seaman who took many prizes in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and who first colonized Virginia.' Gondomar goes on to tell Philip that Raleigh 'sails in October with six or eight ships of 200 to 500 tons, some belonging to himself, some to his companions, all well provided. He will also take launches in which to ascend the Orinoco; he is trying to get ships of very light draught to take them as high up the river as possible. He has already been in the country, and assures people that he knows of a mine that will serve all England with gold.'

The reception of this information in Spain was immediately followed by orders for an increase in the Spanish navy, for Gondomar declared that Raleigh was making the search for a mine a mere excuse to injure the alliance between Spain and England by carrying on a piratical war against Philip.

Perhaps there were some grounds for Gondomar's suspicions. Raleigh represented the old tradition of Elizabeth's sea captains that Spain was to be flouted and crushed whenever occasion offered, either at sea or on land. Any idea of a Spanish

Guiana Again

alliance was detestable to him, and his chief article of faith was a belief that Englishmen alone had a right to set foot in Virginia and Guiana. Raleigh found the greatest support for his expedition in what remained of the anti-Spanish faction, and those who accompanied him were not likely to be too gentle and polite toward the Spaniard when they came across him poaching on their colonial preserves. In spite of James pledging 'his hand, word and faith' to Gondomar that, if the Spaniards were in any way interfered with, Raleigh should pay for it with his life, it was wellnigh inevitable that, in such circumstances, there should be conflict between the two races.

It was even suggested that a blow should be struck at Spanish interests in Europe by Raleigh's ships. Rich Genoa, always on the side of Spain, was to be seized and gutted of its wealth. The King himself did not frown on this project when it came to his ears, yet the plan could never have been serious, and was soon abandoned. Nevertheless, the adventure of sacking Genoa would have been one after Raleigh's own heart and akin to those privateering successes for which of old he had won such renown, and which he had managed so skilfully to combine with more legitimate enterprises. It is said that before he started he held conference with 'some great lords [one of whom was Lord Bacon] who told him they doubted he would be prizing if he could do it handsomely.' 'Yea,' saith he, 'if I can light right on the plate fleet, you will think I were mad if I should refuse it.' To which they answered, 'Why, then, you will be a pirate.'

Sir Walter Raleigh

‘Tush,’ quoth he, ‘my Lord, did you ever hear of anyone who was accounted a pirate for taking millions?’

A retort very much to the point on the part of Raleigh, we cannot help thinking. Yet though he might have piratical intentions by the way, he was absolutely sincere and firm of purpose about the main issue. The commission, which licensed him to voyage in those parts of America possessed by savage tribes and to bring home ‘profitable commodities,’ was signed in August 1616. In other words, he was to work gold mines and bring home gold; no other commodity was meant.

By the following March, Raleigh’s ships were in the Thames, ready to sail. It was reported to Spain by her spies that there were soldiers as well as sailors on board, also arms and ammunition. What were these for, it was asked, if the Spaniards were not to be assailed or their territory encroached upon? Gondomar was not wrong when he assured King Philip that such a large armed force must entail fighting. He offered Spanish protection to Raleigh in working the mine, if he would consent to go with only two ships and no military force.

Naturally, Raleigh refused to be so confiding in Spanish honour, and it suited all parties in England that he should go in full force, strongly equipped, and then to wait to see the course of events on his return before exalting or condemning him. So the man of resolute purpose, absorbed in his dreams of El Dorado ever floating before his eyes, was regarded as a pawn in the game of European diplomacy. Commander-in-Chief that he was,

Guiana Again

holding the King's commission, with power to mete out life and death to his subjects at his own discretion, Raleigh was still an unpardoned man. He was leaving England, as it were, with the halter round his neck. With the expenditure of a little more money he might have purchased his pardon, but not a penny more could he collect, and he was advised by such a great lord of legal acumen as Bacon that his commission amounted to a pardon in itself. Thus he held his life at the King's pleasure when he set sail on that last disastrous voyage.

Troubles and hindrances of all kinds occurred from the outset. Although he left the Thames early in April for Plymouth, it was not till the middle of August that the real start was made from Cork, where Raleigh met Lord Boyle, to whom long ago he had sold his vast Irish estates. After seven wearisome wind-bound weeks in Cork harbour the fleet at last got out to sea again on August 19th. The Canaries were reached by September, and the ships anchored at Lanzarote on a Sunday. The natives had been visited by an invasion of Barbary pirates, and mistook the English fleet for Turkish ships. They fell on a party which had disembarked to forage for provisions, and killed or wounded several. Raleigh dared not permit the Englishmen to retaliate and avenge their comrades, and quenched their eagerness for hostilities by leaving the island. He knew that his every movement was being watched by private enemies, and that a skirmish with these people would be pounced on as a violation of his promise not to injure any of

Sir Walter Raleigh

the King of Spain's dominions. Yet in spite of his restraint, one of his captains, Bailey by name, took the opportunity of deserting and sailing home; he made up a fine story of piratical conduct on his admiral's part, too absurd to be credited till after the failure of the expedition, when it was brought up against Raleigh. Gondomar made capital out of the incident already, by urging Philip to have a statement drawn up to the effect that an English fleet bearing the King's commission had raided the Canary Islands. 'Pray,' he wrote, 'send a fleet to punish the pirate. Every man caught should at once be killed, except Raleigh and the officers, who should be brought to Seville and executed in the *Plaza* the next day.'

Sir Thomas Lake, on King James's behalf, expressed great sorrow for 'the atrocious wickedness' of the English behaviour in the Canaries, and conveyed to Gondomar assurances that His Majesty was determined against Raleigh, and would join the King of Spain in bringing about his ruin, though for the present this resolve was to be kept secret. All of which demonstrates that James was eager to seize the first opportunity of selling his most distinguished subject to the Spaniards, and that Raleigh's doom was sealed even before the events which afterward happened on the Orinoco.

On September the 4th the explorers touched Gomera, another of the Canaries, and here one of the few pleasant incidents of the disastrous voyage came to pass.

The governor's wife happened to be half English, connected with the family of Stafford, and Raleigh

Guiana Again

sent her, by the men who went ashore to obtain a supply of water, courteous messages and presents. The latter consisted of six fine handkerchiefs and six pairs of gloves. The lady of that far-away and lonely island was charmed with her handkerchiefs and gloves, and returned the attention with gracious words and most welcome gifts. 'She sent,' wrote Raleigh, 'four very great loaves of sugar, a basket of lemons which I much desired to comfort and refresh our very sick men, a basket of oranges, a basket of most delicate grapes, another of pomegranates and figs, which trifles were better welcome to me than 1000 crowns would have been.'

More presents were dispatched by Raleigh forthwith, 'an ounce of delicate extract of amber, a great glass of rose water in high estimation here, a very excellent picture of Mary Magdalen and a cutwork ruff,' and these brought from the generous lady 'more of refreshing fruit, a basket of fine white manchets and two dozen fat hens, with a supply of good water.' After this exchange of courtesies the island was sacred to Raleigh, and he threatened his men with death if they plundered it of a pennyworth of anything. 'And we departed without any offence given or received to the value of a farthing, whereof the Count sent his friar aboard my ship with a letter to Don Diego de Sarmiento [Gondomar], Ambassador in England, witnessing how nobly we had behaved ourselves and how justly we had dealt with the inhabitants of the island.'

That the Ambassador and the King of England between them had laid their heads together to

Sir Walter Raleigh

undo the greatest seaman alive, whether he did well or ill, was of course a fact of which the unsuspecting governor of Gomera was in ignorance.

The island was left with warm expressions of kindness and good-will on both sides. Afterward Fortune smiled no more on the luckless voyagers. Everything went wrong, gales kept them tossing about on the Atlantic for six weeks. Sickness and pestilence raged on board, striking down officers and men. Raleigh's servant, Talbot, died, 'as faithful and true a man as ever lived. I lost him to my inestimable grief,' recorded his unhappy master. There was a shortage of water, and the heat was intolerable. When the winds dropped a dead calm set in and the ships lay motionless as if gripped in a vice of molten brass. Next a great darkness, weird and horrible, descended on them, lasting two days. Forty-two men on the 'Destiny,' of which young Walter Raleigh was captain, died, and there were hundreds of others suffering torments from thirst and plague. Raleigh himself caught a deadly chill, for, when roused from his bed by a sudden whirlwind, he rushed on deck to get some air, and in another hour he too was prostrate with fever.

He lay near to death for many weary days. And on the 10th of November, when land was sighted and was hailed with a rapturous cry by the crews, the Admiral was too weak to do more than raise himself languidly on his elbow and gaze wistfully at the coast for which he yearned.

CHAPTER XXII: *A Chapter of Disasters*

RALEIGH'S reception by his old friends the Indians was full of reverence and devoted cordiality. One or two of the chiefs had been with him in England. They all remembered how before, when he had come to Guiana, he had called their captains together and made them understand that he was the servant of a Queen who was the great 'Cassique' (Lord) of the North, and had more 'Cassiques' under her than there were trees in their country; that she was an enemy of the 'Castellanos' (Spaniards) because of their tyranny and oppression.

They were not to know how things had changed since, how that 'Cassique' had been succeeded by another who was no enemy of the 'Castellanos,' but a King who pandered to them and tolerated their tyranny and oppression cheerfully.

Now they were eager to tend the great sick Englishman, and brought him bread, delicious pine-apples, fresh fish and meat. He was carried ashore in his litter, and away from the pestilential ship he was established in a tent, and began to gain strength. His men, too, landed and were hospitably entertained. By one of his captains, who was invalided home, Sir Walter sent a letter to his lady with the good news that Guiana's coast had been reached:

'Sweetheart. I can yet write unto you but with a weak hand, for I have suffered the most violent calenture for fifteen days that ever man did, and lived: but God that gave me strong heart in all my

Sir Walter Raleigh

adversities hath also now strengthened it in the hell-fire of heat. We have had two most grievous sicknesses in our ship, of which forty-two have died and there are yet many sick, but having recovered the land of Guiana this 12th of November I hope we shall recover them. We are yet 200 men, and the rest of our fleet are reasonably strong—strong enough I hope to perform what we have undertaken, if the diligent care at London to make our strength known to the Spanish King by his Ambassador hath not taught the Spaniards to fortify all the entrances against us. Howsoever we must make the adventure and if we perish it shall be no honour for England, nor gain for his Majesty to loose, among many other, one hundred as valiant gentlemen as England hath in it.’ And Raleigh adds with pride that though it would be ‘a vanitie to say that he might be King of the Indians,’ his name has lived among them. ‘They feed me with fresh meat and all that the country yields; all offer to obey me.’

Before the expedition had started to find the mine, many of the men showed signs of sullen discontent. Raleigh’s exhausted state from illness made his leadership of the river excursion out of the question, besides his presence with the fleet was necessary, so it was agreed he should stay behind at Trinidad with the five large ships, while Kemys, with the small vessels, guided the rest up the Orinoco.

Raleigh’s lieutenant, Sir Wareham St Leger, was also detained at Trinidad by sickness, and his place was taken by Sir Walter’s nephew, George Raleigh. The land forces were under the command of young Walter Raleigh, the son so often affectionately re-



"HE WAS CARRIED ASHORE IN HIS LITTER"—Page 155

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ferred to as 'little Wat' in his parents' letters. He had been sent to Oxford at fourteen, and inherited much of his father's culture and adventurous spirit.

There could be no disguising the fact that the enterprise was fraught with grave risks. There was a Spanish settlement somewhere in Guiana though none could exactly localize it, and this made encounters with the Spaniards inevitable sooner or later. Soldiers and sailors to the number of 400 escorted the party as a preparation for all contingencies. It was hoped, however, to get to the mine without a fight.

The river expedition departed on December 10th, and their instructions were that they were to make for the mine and avoid a conflict with the Spaniards, if possible.

The soldiers were to encamp between the Spanish town (if there was one) and the mine. 'If the Spaniards make war on you,' Raleigh said, 'you are to repel them if it be in your power and drive them as far as you can.'

Kemys had orders that, should the mine not prove as rich as was hoped and be hardly worth keeping, he was only to carry away a few samples of ore as proof that the design of working it had been genuine. They were to be cautious in landing, 'for with the exception of a few gentlemen,' wrote Raleigh, 'I know what a scum of men you have and I would not for all the world receive a blow from the Spaniards to the dishonour of our nation.'

By the 31st the party of explorers had reached the town of San Thomé, which had been built by

Sir Walter Raleigh

the Spanish settlers on the banks of the river. Here they landed on New Year's Day to rest the night before starting for the mine. According to Raleigh's account but not that of the Spaniards, an ambuscade was led against them at nine o'clock in the evening by a Captain Geronimo de Grados, and the English, whose rank and file were useless, were fallen upon after dark, and after being cast into confusion, rallied sufficiently to repulse the enemy. They pursued them to the town, and here the fighting was resumed. In the fray young Walter Raleigh lost his life. He was felled to the earth by the butt-end of a Spanish musket after an exhibition of dare-devil bravery.

When the town, consisting as it did of 130 poor palm-leaf huts, had fallen, the Spaniards retired to an island near, whence they kept up a desultory fire. Somehow or other a week was allowed to elapse before any movement was made in the direction of the mine, which, if Kemys's calculations were right, could only have been eight miles distant. The spirits of the men wavered when 250 were shot by the Spaniards lying in ambush, and they grumbled and cursed the unfortunate Kemys, who was also steadily losing heart. Then the Indians brought news of Spanish reinforcements on their way up the river, and there was nothing to be done but to reimbark the dwindled forces and to drift down with the swift current of the river back to Trinidad, with a tale of failure that broke the heart of the man who had staked all that was dearest to him in life on its success.

Before they left San Thomé all the English soldiers

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assembled under arms for young Raleigh's burial, and with reversed muskets, trailed pikes and muffled drums, laid him near the high altar in the Church of St Thomas.

Poor Kemys was bitterly reproached when he came to Raleigh on March 2nd bringing no sheaves with him, but only a miserable story of reverses.

'I told him that, seeing my son was lost, I cared not if he had lost a hundred more in opening the mine so my credit had been saved. What shall become of me now, I know not. I am unpardoned in England, and my poor estate consumed, and whether any other State or prince will give me bread I know not.'

Kemys, who had been his true and devoted servant since boyhood, never faltering in his loyalty, and in whom Raleigh had placed implicit trust and confidence, so took to heart his master's reproaches that he soon after committed suicide in his cabin.

No wonder Raleigh wrote in his most pathetic letter to his wife, telling her of their boy's death, 'my brains are broken.'

'I was loth to write,' the letter ran, 'because I knew not how to comfort you; and God knows I never knew what sorrow meant till now. Comfort you heart, dearest Besse, I shall sorrow for us both. . . . The Lord bless and comfort you that you may bear patiently the death of so valiant a son.'

Then in a long postscript he tells her the whole story of Kemys's expedition and its failure.

'There never was a poor man so exposed to slaughter as I was,' he ends. 'My brains are broken and I cannot write much . . .'

Sir Walter Raleigh

‘Whitney, for whom I sold my plate at Plymouth, and to whom I gave more credit than all my captains, ran from me at the Grenadas, and Wollaston with him, so as I am now but five ships, and one of those I have sent home with a rabble of idle rascals in her which I know will not spare to wound me, but I care not. I am sure there is never a base slave in the fleet hath taken the pains and care I have done, hath slept so little and hath travailed so much. My friends will not believe them and for the rest I care not.’

Raleigh’s bitterness and self-pity were not without cause. Many of his men were mutinous, two of his captains had deserted and wanted to turn pirates for their own advantage.

Another attack on Guiana in these circumstances was out of the question, and in depths of despondency he finally set sail for England.

Lord Arundel and the Earl of Pembroke had stood surety for him, and Raleigh would not betray their trust. ‘I have brought myself and my ship to England . . . at the manifest peril of my life . . . for even death itself shall not make me turn thief and vagabond nor will I ever betray the noble courtesy of the several gentlemen who gave sureties for me.’

He arrived at Plymouth in the ‘Destiny,’ on the 21st of June. His state of mind was one of utter despair. He had failed in what he had pledged his life to perform, and, contrary to the conditions imposed upon him, had molested a Spanish settlement and embroiled English soldiers with those of Spain. The whole undertaking had been hopeless from

A Chapter of Disasters

start to finish, a buccaneering venture which only success could have saved from the world's censure.

Slowly and surely Gondomar, the crafty, relentless ambassador, had completed his deep-laid schemes of removing the one great survivor of the old violent animosity between the two leading nations of Europe. And now at his bidding the King of England was ready to condemn, unheard, the most brilliant and distinguished Englishman of his time.

‘They have sent to arrest Raleigh and his ships at Plymouth,’ Gondomar wrote in his secret dispatches to Philip. ‘If he has brought anything of value it is sure to have been stolen, but I am told he has nothing but some tobacco and a dish and ewer of silver gilt. It is certain Raleigh will try to excuse himself by saying that everything has been done without his orders, and thus cast the blame upon the dead as he and his friends are already doing. But withal the living bring the plunder, and I think everything possible is being done here in your Majesty’s interest to bring them no signal punishment and restitution. The King gave me his faith, his hand, and his word that if Raleigh dared so much as to look upon any of your Majesty’s territories or vassals, even if he brought back his ships loaded with gold, he would hand all of them with Raleigh himself to your Majesty that you might hang him in the Plaza of Madrid. Now that the time has come for fulfilment, and I have reminded him of it, his Majesty has promised that he will do it as soon as a judicial examination proves the excesses to have been committed . . . he has

Sir Walter Raleigh

sent Buckingham and Digby to me to say that Raleigh shall be punished with the utmost severity; . . . that Raleigh's friends and all England shall not save him from the gallows.'

Gondomar boasted that, since he came to London as ambassador, he had shown the English that he was disinclined to suffer any slights, either personally or directed against his country. In a private conversation with James, Gondomar asked him what he would think if a Spanish fleet were to make the same hostile entry into the ports of Scotland or Ireland as his ships under Raleigh had done on their way to the Orinoco. The King replied that he had 'spoken very well,' and cited an excellent example. Raleigh he pronounced 'a thief,' and said there was no excuse for him. However, the Ambassador felt that, in spite of the King's assurances, if justice were to be done, his Majesty would require some reminder to carry it out.

'Even if the King hang Raleigh,' he wrote to his master, 'and restores the plunder, I should grieve that your Majesty should be satisfied with this for so atrocious a wickedness. . . . Perhaps such an opportunity will never occur again of asserting ourselves and giving them a lesson. I told the King and Council that Your Majesty's goodness might lead you to pardon offences against yourself, but conscience will not allow you to forgive injuries against your subjects.'

Raleigh's misdemeanours were thus monstrously exaggerated to alarm the King of England, and to serve as an object lesson to teach Europe how submissively that monarch could be made bow to Spain.

CHAPTER XXIII: *Gondomar's Letters*

NOTHING can give a clearer notion of the way in which Sir Walter Raleigh was sacrificed to Spain, than the letters (already quoted) of the Ambassador, who was so set on hounding him to his death.

We owe the discovery of many of these facts to the diligent researches made by Major Martin A. S. Hume in the Palace Library of Madrid and at Samancas, where these documents, so filled with venomous spite, have been preserved. Yet it was not for private revenge, as Mr Hume points out, or for the actual sins of the last attempt on Guiana, that Gondomar pursued this persistent course of malice, but to impress indelibly upon England that Spain, and Spain alone, should hold sway in South America.

The story of Raleigh's eventful life at this point where it is nearing its end cannot be better told than in giving further extracts from these letters, in which brutal boasts and threats are veiled with scarcely a shred of diplomatic reticence.

On the 14th of June the Ambassador wrote, saying that he had always urged upon James the mistake of letting Raleigh sail with so many ships, which could only mean the robbery and devastation of Spanish territory.

'I urged that prevention was much better than cure, whereupon your Majesty replied that you would insist upon due sureties being given that Raleigh should do no harm. I wrote this to my

Sir Walter Raleigh

King who, in accordance with this assurance refrained from sending out his fleet to oppose Raleigh notwithstanding that he was informed by others of the evil intentions of the latter. We know now that Raleigh assailed the Canaries and attacked towns in Guiana, burning churches and committing irreparable damage. Captain Bailey left him when he saw what he was about . . . prompt and severe public action should now be taken against Raleigh in order that my master should see by Your Majesty's acts that you are really desirous of his friendship.'

On June 20th, when Raleigh had reached Plymouth, the Ambassador writes again:

'Raleigh has arrived with all the property he has seized from my master's subjects. I do not call it stolen, or him a pirate because, as he returns so confidently to an English port, after all I said to your Majesty to prevent his sailing, it is evident that those who told my King that Raleigh was going as commander of your Majesty's Fleet for the purpose of waylaying and plundering the Spanish Flotilla and conquering my master's territories will persist in their opinion.

'His Catholic Majesty will certainly see that when I persuaded him that Raleigh would do no harm I was deceived—for the facts are notoriously otherwise. Your Majesty has so good a memory that you will not forget your "faith, hand and word" pledged to me. Walter Raleigh has robbed, sacked and burnt and murdered Spanish subjects and has brought back enough wealth to make him and his supporters rich. Justice demands that Raleigh and all his companions shall be hanged directly they set

Gondomar's Letters

one foot on English soil, without waiting for them to set the other foot. I am quite sure the King my master would treat any of his vassals so if they had commenced this rupture.'

Even more plainly did Gondomar speak when he paid farewell visits to James before his intended departure for Madrid. This Herod and Pilate embraced and pressed hands, and James remarked that, 'so far as greatness was concerned,' the King of Spain was greater of course than all the rest of Christian kings put together.

'When I thanked him he seized my hand, held it, pressing it in his, saying that never in public or private would he do or even think anything against Your Majesty, but would in all things strive to avoid evil to you. He had, he said, quite banished piracy, and for the last two years no one had dared to bring to England property seized from Spaniards. In talk the King admitted that if Your Majesty would be his friend he needed nothing else.'

On the 16th of July Gondomar wrote to King of Spain, describing interviews in which Raleigh's fate was sealed:

'I had taken leave of the King and was about to set out for Spain when, in accordance with Your Majesty's orders, I deferred my departure and sent to ask for another audience.

'The King sent to say that, on Monday 2nd, he would expect me at Greenwich. I thought I had better see the Council first and tackle them, so I conferred with Buckingham who ordered them in the King's name to give me audience. . . . I fixed five o'clock on the 29th of June; and on my arrival

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all the Councillors came out to meet me, the Archbishop of Canterbury saying that they had suspended all their business and willingly attended my orders.'

This gave Gondomar his chance of enlarging on Raleigh's crimes. He enumerated the 'murders, sackings, pillage and burnings' of which he was guilty, 'such as were never seen in time of war.' He said how offended the King of Spain was at such insolence. Once more he repeated the King's pledge on 'faith, hand and word,' to surrender Raleigh and his companions to be hanged in the Plaza of Madrid.

There were friends of Raleigh's in the Council who were indignant at the arrogant attitude the Spanish Ambassador had assumed. They said he dared to use expressions such as no king or council of England had ever allowed before from a foreign ambassador. They objected to his calling the King to account for Raleigh's acts, and saying that he had promised to hand him over, if he did anything to offend Spain, to be hanged in Madrid; just as if England, forsooth, were tributary to the King of Spain.

Gondomar told the Council that Philip had no need of the King of England's friendship, and in future would guard his own prestige and the safety of his subjects' lives and property.

Bacon made answer for himself and fellow-councillors that they were all very sorry, but the King should not be held responsible for the excesses of a private person.

The King would fulfil his promise and give full satisfaction. He had publicly condemned Raleigh's

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proceedings and had arrested him and his ships as soon as he came back. The Archbishop, 'doffing his bonnet,' said that Raleigh's proceedings certainly deserved punishment. Another special Council was held by James at Greenwich, and the general conclusion arrived at was that ample compensation should be given to Spain, and Raleigh and his companions severely punished.

The next afternoon, Gondomar was rowed down the river to Greenwich Palace, and swaggered gaily into the King's Chamber: he next was duly embraced by the King, and when the doors were closed Gondomar further denounced Raleigh, and James became very humble and apologetic. Gondomar had been a true prophet, he said, and he, the King, had been deceived. He had always doubted the existence of a mine, but he never could have believed that such crimes as Raleigh's could have been committed. When Gondomar said that the time was past for inquiries and delays, that Raleigh should be hanged at once, the King made a feint of being outraged. He snatched off his hat, tore his hair, and said if that was Spain's idea of justice, it was not England's. He never had and never would, with God's help, allow a man to be condemned unheard in his own defence without a proper trial.

Of course, Gondomar admitted, the laws of Spain and England differed, for such men would have been punished in Spain without all this discussion and procrastination. What had the King of Spain not done for James, and now he took the part of a pirate against his friend?

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Gondomar had told him the plain truth, but since this was of no avail, his King would doubtless take the matter into his own hands and defend the honour of Spain. This threat of war alarmed King James, and he begged the Ambassador to send his pledge of peace to Spain that same night. He promised to arrange for the Council to meet the following Wednesday and decide upon Raleigh's sentence, which he vowed should be carried out without delay. Gondomar, when he dispatched the report of this interview to Philip, did not attempt to conceal his exultation at the 'prestige' it would give Spain for the King of England to hand over one of his subjects to be punished in a foreign country. He left the King's presence in high delight and took a walk in the gardens with the Duke of Lennox. The King sent after him a basket of cherries, which he ate as he went along, and the frivolous King, looking out of the window, called out in fits of laughter. 'A dignified ambassador indeed, eating cherries out of a basket.'

Thus with a noble life hanging in the balance could King James lightly bandy jokes. At the next meeting of the Council there was strong opposition taken to the step of sending Raleigh to be hanged in Spain. But James said his promise was given and he could not break it. Carew, Raleigh's loyal kinsman, prayed on his knees that Raleigh should not be condemned unheard. Bacon, though he was not a friend of Raleigh's, tried to dissuade the King from the humiliation of handing him over to the Spaniards. He suggested that James had made the promise rashly without intending it to be

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accepted literally, a suggestion which greatly angered the King. He declared he had meant what he said and would carry it out.

Again he and the Ambassador met, this time on more affectionate terms than before. Gondomar offered to write the dispatch in answer to the King of Spain's by James's dictation. But when it was written, Gondomar declared it was not strong enough, and must be written over again in more explicit terms. When James hesitated Gondomar began to bully him into agreeing to send Raleigh and the others to Spain in the 'Destiny.'

Satisfied with this humiliating pledge, which was confirmed by a letter to the King of Spain from the Duke of Buckingham, who was said to be more Spanish than a Spaniard in his sympathies, Gondomar departed for Madrid.

All this time Raleigh was under arrest at Plymouth. He might have gone to France and sold himself to the service of Richelieu and the French King, but he was honourable enough to return and so invited capture. Vice-Admiral Sir Lewis Stukeley of Devon, related to him by blood, was appointed to bring him to London. Raleigh had been met by his faithful Bess, and, with one of his devoted followers, Captain King, was winding up his affairs at Plymouth. Stukeley at first proved so casual a jailor that Raleigh might still have slipped over to France in a French vessel that lay in the Sound, yet he resisted the temptation. Maybe that hope revived and his indomitable spirit made a last rebound at the thought that a future of peace and honour at home might still be in store for him.

CHAPTER XXIV: *Raleigh defends himself in Letters to Lord Carew*

ON the 21st of June 1618, Raleigh wrote from Plymouth to his kinsman, Lord Carew, an important letter containing his version of what had happened. He was eager that the statement should be laid before the Lords of the Council as soon as possible, in order that his friends might make a motion in his favour.

He¹ begins by referring to a previous letter which he had written to Mr Secretary Winwood, who had died since he had received it, and continues as follows:

‘By that letter your Lordship will have learnt the reasons given by Kemys for not discovering the mine, which could have been done, notwithstanding his obstinacy, by means of the cacique of the country, an old acquaintance of mine, if the

¹ RALEIGH'S LETTER TO MR SECRETARY WINWOOD

SIR,—Since the death of Kemys it is considered by the Sergeant-Major and others of his inward friends, that he told them he could have brought them into the mine within two hours march from the riverside; but because my son was slain, myself unpardoned and not like to live, he had no reason to open the mine either for the Spaniard or the King. They answered that the King (though I were not pardoned) had granted me my heart's desire under the Great Seal. He replied that the grant to me was as to a man *non eus* in the law, and therefore of no force. But when I was resolved to write to yr. Honour, he prayed me to join with him in excusing him for not going to the mine. I answered him I would not do it, but if he himself could satisfy the King and State that he had reason not to open it I should be glad of it . . . but for my part

Raleigh defends himself

companies had remained in the river two days longer; inasmuch as the cacique offered pledges to do it. The servant of the Governor, moreover, who is now with me, could have led them to two gold mines not two leagues distant from the town, as well as to a silver mine at not more than three harquebuss shots distant, and I will make this truth manifest when my health allows me to go to London. As for the rest, if Whitney and Wollaston had not gone from me to the Granadas, and the rest had not abandoned me. . . . I would have returned from Newfoundland to Guiana and would have died there or fulfilled my undertaking. When I saw that they had deserted me I resolved to steer for Newfoundland to take in water and clean the ship.' He then relates the story of the mutiny, of how the men resisted and shouted and said they would rather die than return to England; and how they took possession of the magazine, armour and swords and tried to intimidate him into turning pirate. 'I answered that even if I were a beggar I would not be a robber or do anything base, nor would I abuse the confidence and commission of the King. I am well aware that with my ship, than which in the world there is no better, I could have enriched

I must avow that he might without loss have done it. He told me that he would wait on me presently and give me better satisfaction. But I was no sooner come for him unto my cabin when I heard a pistol go off over my head, and sending to know who shot it, word was brought to me that Kemys shot it out of his cabin window to clean it, and his boy going into the cabin found him lying upon his bed with much blood upon him, and looking in his face saw him dead. The pistol did but crack his rib, but he found a long knife in his body.

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myself to 100,000 in the space of three months and could have collected a company which would have impeded the traffic of Europe. But those who have told the King that I had feigned the mine and really intended to turn Corsair, are really mistaken in their malice, for after failing in the discovery of the mine, by fault of another, and after having lost my estate and my son and being without pardon for myself or security for my life, I have held it all as nought, and offer myself to His Majesty to do with me as he will without making any terms. As for the mutineers the greatest number of them fled from me in Ireland. . . . Since my arrival in Ireland I have been told that I have fallen into the grave displeasure of His Majesty for having taken a town in Guiana which was in the possession of Spaniards. When my men heard this, they were so afraid of being hanged that they were on the point of making me sail away again by force. With regard to taking the town, although I gave no authority for it to be done, it was impossible to avoid it, because when the English were landed at night . . . the Spaniards attacked them with the intention of destroying them, killing several and wounding many. . . . It was in the entrance of the town my son was killed. . . . And my Lord, that Guiana be Spanish territory can never be acknowledged, for I myself took possession of it for the Queen of England by virtue of a session of all the native chiefs of the country. His Majesty knows this to be true, as is proved by the concession granted by him under the Great Seal of England to Harcourt. . . . It will thus be seen that His Majesty, in any case, has a

Raleigh defends himself

better right and title than anyone. I heard in Ireland that my enemies have declared that it was my intention to turn Corsair and fly, but at the manifest peril of my life I have brought myself and my ship to England. I have suffered as many miseries as it was possible for me to suffer, which I could not have endured if God had not given me strength. If His Majesty wishes that I should suffer even more, let God's will be done, for even Death itself shall not make me turn thief or vagabond, nor will I ever betray the noble courtesy of the several gentlemen who gave sureties for me.—Your poor Kinsman, W. RALEIGH.

Postscript.—I beg you will excuse me to my lords for not writing to them, because want of sleep for fear of being surprised in my cabin at night has almost deprived me of my sight, and some return of the pleurisy which I had in the Tower has so weakened my hand that I cannot hold the pen—21st June 1618.'

The letter is given here in full, because it contains Raleigh's principal points of defence, and makes clear much that would otherwise be difficult to understand with regard to his actions. It also shows that he was not fully aware of his hazardous position. Before he had sent off this letter he learned in some way what charges were to be made against him by the officers who had deserted, and enclosed another letter under the same cover in which he replies to them one by one.

He emphatically denies that he wasted time at Plymouth before the outward voyage, and that he received any other provisions in the Canaries be-

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sides 'a basket of oranges and three loaves of sugar' sent by the Countess of Gomera.

As to the accusation that he intended to abandon his country and bring those under him into trouble, he urges that, as far as his accusers were concerned, he could have done it with their consent, and that his having come back to cast himself on His Majesty's mercy was sufficient proof of his good faith.

'I hope to live to answer them to their faces,' he wrote, 'and prove them all to be cowards and liars and in spirit thieves. I write this after having sealed the other letters, and I pray you give a copy to my poor wife who, with the death of her son and these rumours, I fear will go mad. I forgot to answer the third article, in which they accuse me of having sacked the town before seeking the mine. . . . With regard to their most impudent assertion that the entering of the town and the burning of the houses was contrary to all my promises and protestations, I shall be content to suffer death if I had any part or knowledge whatever of the burning or sacking. I know nothing about it. . . .' This was indeed true, Raleigh was many miles away from the exploring expedition when it took the ill-fated step of attacking San Thomé, the one spot of Guiana which the Spaniards could call their own under any sort of protest. Had he been actually in command he would no doubt have advised some other place for landing, and one of the two main charges against him, *i.e.* that he had attacked a territory already in possession of the Spaniards could never have been made. But as we have seen from the correspondence of the Spanish Ambassador

Raleigh defends himself

with the Kings of England and Spain, Raleigh's doom had been sealed before he even set foot in Guiana. What else could King James have meant when he gave his promise upon his 'faith, hand and word' to send Raleigh to be hanged in Madrid if he 'even so much as looked upon the territories or subjects of the King of Spain.' What is more, a scheme had been laid by Gondomar from the beginning that English and Spaniards should be embroiled, and that the conflict between the two should serve as an excuse for the fulfilment of the King's promise. Confident that the adventurers would have as much severity exercised toward them as if they had done the 'like spoil in any of the cities of England' in having obtained King James's pledge to that effect, Gondomar had departed for Spain a few days after the arrival of Raleigh in the 'Destiny' at Plymouth. While the doomed man was still on the high seas, James had issued a proclamation denouncing the affair of San Thomé as scandalous. He declared his detestation of the said insolences, and urged all his subjects to give evidence in the matter in order that the guilty should be brought to punishment. We shall now see what that punishment was to be and how it was met by Raleigh.

CHAPTER XXV: *Betrayal*

ON July 25th the journey of Sir Walter to London in the custody of Stukeley began. The party consisted of himself, Lady Raleigh and servants, King, his loyal captain, and a Frenchman, a quack doctor called Manourie, whom Raleigh suspected of being a spy though he put faith in his medical skill. Manourie made mischief between Raleigh and his gaoler by repeating remarks that he let fall by the way, such as when they rode by his beloved home, Sherborne Park, his exclaiming, 'All this was mine and it was taken from me unjustly.'

They baited and lodged at 'divers gentlemen's houses' upon the road; and hearing from some of the hosts of the storm brewing against him at court, Raleigh began to regret that he had not taken advantage of the opportunity which offered itself at Plymouth to make an escape to France, and confided to King his desire to accomplish it in some other way. They came to Salisbury by way of Wilton on July 27th, and here Raleigh acted one of those parts altogether unworthy of that side of his character which we have learned to admire. He feigned sickness, and the French quack dressed him for the rôle of malingerer. Manourie declared that he asked him to mix him a powerful emetic in order to 'evacuate bad humours' and to gain 'time to work my friends and order my affairs, perhaps even to pacify His Majesty.' The King was on his summer progress, and in its course was to stay at Salisbury, and Raleigh counted on meeting

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him there, and throwing himself on his mercy. Lady Raleigh and her retinue, with the faithful Captain King, proceeded to London, leaving Raleigh at Salisbury to be ministered to by Bishop Andrew's physicians, who were greatly puzzled by his strange malady. For four days he was invalided, living on a smuggled leg of mutton, and writing his rapid and effective *Apology for the Voyage to Guiana*. Manourie acted as his amanuensis, and copied the manuscript and accepted money from Raleigh for his pains. As soon as the treatise was written, Raleigh recovered. He was apparently not in the least ashamed of the deception he had practised, and justified it in his last speech by citing the example of David. 'David did make himself a fool and suffered spittle to fall upon his beard that he might escape the hands of his enemies.'

The King arrived at Salisbury on August 1st, and whether or not Raleigh succeeded in bringing his *Apology* to his notice, the only result seems to have been that a royal command was issued for the prisoner's immediate removal to London.

The eagerness of France to provide so distinguished a fugitive as Raleigh with a refuge was demonstrated at Brentford when a French gentleman managed to get speech with him and advised him that Le Clerc, a French agent in London, had something of importance to communicate to him. On reaching London, where he was permitted at first to stay in his wife's house in Broad Street, Le Clerc called on him and said arrangements for his escape had been made and a ship was waiting to take him across the Channel. But as King had also a

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plan in mind, Raleigh naturally preferred to trust himself to his old servant rather than to foreign hands. Not suspecting the treachery of his base kinsman, Stukeley, who had procured a warrant authorizing him to connive at and appear to be shutting his eyes to Raleigh's intended flight, he repaired on Sunday night, August 9th, to the boat King had got in readiness, with two wherries, at the Tower Dock. He had put on a green hatband and a false beard, and was accompanied by Sir Lewis Stukeley and his son as a page of his own. 'Under the visor of friendship' Stukeley played his double game, pretending the liveliest interest in the plans for Raleigh's escape while all the time he was keeping the authorities well posted up in every move. He saluted Captain King as he was entering the boat, and asked him if he had not behaved like an honest man, to which King responded with grim evasion that he hoped he would continue so. The oarsmen had scarcely rowed twenty strokes when they became nervous and complained of another boat following them. Raleigh's suspicions were raised, but Stukeley endeavoured to reassure him, and then 'cursed and damned himself' for venturing his fortunes with a runaway who had so little trust and confidence in his guidance. Persuaded thus that there was no cause for alarm they proceeded, and not till Woolwich was passed did Raleigh's fears reawaken. Now all Stukeley's reassurances and embraces failed to convince him, and on coming to Plumstead he gave the men orders to turn round. They came face to face with the pursuing boat, and the captive saw that the game was up, but he still



"HE SALUTED CAPTAIN KING AS HE WAS ENTERING THE
BOAT"—Page 178

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did not realize the treachery of Stukeley, who embraced him and suggested ways of securing his safety. But on landing at Greenwich the traitor threw off the mask, which he had worn with such Judas-like deception, and handed over his prisoner to men from the other boat. Then it was that Raleigh uttered in the hearing of King the single reproach, 'Sir Lewis, these actions will not turn out to your credit.' Prophetic words, for this traitor was discovered later 'clipping the gold' bestowed on him as purchase money for his treachery, and retired to the lonely wind-swept Isle of Lundy, in the waters of the Severn, where he died, raving mad, his name held in everlasting odium and execrated by all.

Captain King, staunch and loyal to the last, left his master only at the Tower gates 'to the tuition of *Him*,' he said afterward, 'with Whom I do not doubt that his soul resteth.'

Once more Sir Walter passed in through the gloomy portals of the prison house with which he was so sadly familiar, from which he had emerged with his face 'towards the sunset' full of new hopes and faith in the success of his mission a year or two before. And now all the learned lawyers and judges of the realm cudgelled their brains as to how some plausible legal pretext was to be found for bringing Raleigh to the block.

In Madrid a council of Dons had met and come to the decision that, after all, it was advisable the execution should take place in London and not in Spain. A foreign tribunal therefore condemned him before even the semblance of a trial had been

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gone through at home. His death was a foregone conclusion, but the way in which it was to be compassed was still debatable.

The condemnation at Winchester fifteen years earlier was to serve as the nominal cause of his destruction, but it was necessary to trump up additional reasons. The Privy Council did all in their power by constant cross-questioning to wring admissions of guilt from Raleigh. It was not sufficient to charge him with piratical intentions which could not be proved, or to make capital out of his negotiations with France. There only remained the questionable conduct of the expedition and his collision with Spanish subjects.

Nothing could shake Raleigh's firmness with regard to the incidents of the voyage. He affirmed unhesitatingly that San Thomé was not counted a Spanish possession, because he himself had annexed it in 1595, a fact which the Queen had recognized by granting Harcourt and himself patents.

The whole autumn was spent in these futile arguments, and at one time even bets were being laid at court that Sir Walter Raleigh would in the end get off with his life. His friend, Queen Anne, pleaded for him earnestly from a bed of sickness. Vain pleadings these, for she had lost long since any influence she may ever have had on her callous, coarse-minded husband. Even Buckingham, it was said, was in favour of his life being spared, but though kingly promises, as a rule, might be broken with impunity, a promise made to Spain was apparently sacred and James intended to keep it.

CHAPTER XXVI: *The End*

TRIAL by jury in Raleigh's case was said to be legally out of the question, because his sentence to death at Winchester still held good, and for civil purposes he was already practically dead. It was therefore proposed that the Council should sit in secret and discuss whether the prisoner should be brought up under Habeas Corpus before the King's Bench. This was the course finally decided upon, and the warrant issued with the great seal affixed on 'October 24th.'

Ill and utterly disheartened as he was, Raleigh had been able to withstand the machinations of his last keeper, Sir Thomas Wilson, who had been put in charge of him with the express purpose of spying on him, by winning his confidence. This person, distinguished for having performed many services of a like nature, tried to ingratiate himself with the prisoner so as to trap him, during familiar converse, into making admissions which could be used as evidence against him. Wilson intercepted his letters to Lady Raleigh, and promised him his sovereign's pardon if he would tell all he knew, but all these measures were useless, for Raleigh still repudiated the 'new crimes' attributed to him. He had never intended to be a pirate; never 'sought for a Commission from France nor ever had any,' and to these statements he adhered.

He was roused out of his sleep early on the morning of the 28th, shivering from an ague and burning with fever. They took him in this condition from the Tower to appear before the King's Bench in Westminster Hall, and as he passed

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through the draughty corridors an old retainer drew attention to the fact that he had not combed his thick grey curls. 'Let them kam it that have it,' he answered, and then, to bring a smile to the old servant's woeful face, he added, 'Peter, dost thou know of any plaister to set a man's head on again when it is off?'

On his arrival before the judges, Yelverton, the Attorney-General, called for execution on the conviction of 1603; and observed 'the prisoner hath been a star at which the world hath gazed, but stars may fall, nay, they must fall when they trouble the sphere wherein they abide.' Chief Justice Montague also improved the occasion with a rhetorical lecture, and then asked the prisoner if he had anything to set forth why sentence should not be passed. He tried to defend the Guiana expedition, but was instantly cut short and told he was not speaking to the purpose.

'All I can say then,' answered Raleigh, 'is that the judgement I received to die so long since cannot now I hope be strained, for since then it was His Majesty's pleasure to grant me a commission to proceed on a voyage beyond the seas, wherein I had martial power on the life and death of others, so under favour, I presume I stand discharged of that judgement, by that commission I gained new life and vigour; for he that hath power over the lives of others must surely be master of his own.'

'The commission does not infer pardon,' was the judge's reply, 'because treason is a crime which must be pardoned by express words not by implication.'

The End

If that were his Lordship's opinion, said Raleigh, he could do nothing but put himself upon the mercy of the King. Had not His Majesty been exasperated anew against him he might have lived a thousand years before he would have taken advantage of that conviction. He begged for time to settle his affairs, and for pen, ink and papers, as he wished to relieve his conscience by making a statement in writing to satisfy the King. His last shred of hope had been based on the idea that the commission had been as good as a pardon, now that hope was gone he resigned himself to fate with perfect calmness and dignity. He even had a 'smiling countenance' as he was led from William Rufus's noble hall to the little prison in the Gatehouse of Westminster, where he was to spend his last hours. The craven King, who had shamefully doomed the most distinguished of his subjects to suffer death to please a foreign power, kept out of London at one of his country seats. No doubt he indulged in his favourite pastime of galloping heavily after the hounds in pursuit of a stag while the block was being prepared in Palace Yard for the sacrifice of his human victim.

Here the last chapter of Raleigh's tragic history was to be closed in the morning of Lord Mayor's Day, the holiday being chosen, as it was hoped that scenes of festivity would attract the crowds in other directions and prevent a popular demonstration at Westminster. Everything that was best and finest in Raleigh's character shone out brilliantly at the end. No more did he cringe and write abject letters beseeching a base King to spare his life. Though he had loved and clung to life, he did not

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shrink from death now it stared him in the face; that Death which he had apostrophized so grandly in the following famous passage: 'Oh eloquent just and mighty death, whom none could advise thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered thou hast cast out of the world and despised; thou hast drawn together all the far stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words "*Hic jacet.*"'

It was during that last night in the Gatehouse prison that he wrote on the fly-leaf of his Bible:

Even such is Time, that takes on trust
Our youth, our joys, our all we have,
And pays us but with earth and dust;
Who, in the dark and silent grave,
When we have wandered all our ways,
Shuts up the story of our days:
But from this earth, this grave, this dust
My God shall raise me up, I trust.

Who that reads these last two lines can doubt that Raleigh, the man who had been charged so lightly with atheism,¹ looked forward with steadfast faith

¹The Captain who gave such instructions as the following was no atheist: 'Orders to be observed by the commanders of the Fleet and Land Companies under the Charge and Conduct of Sir Walter Raleigh Knight, bound for the South Parts of America—given at Plymouth in Devon May 3rd 1617.

'First, because no action or enterprise can prosper without the favour of Almighty God the Lord and Strength of hosts and armies ye shall not fail to cause divine service to be read in your ship every morning and evening, in the morning before dinner and at night before supper, or, at least once in the day praising God every night with singing of psalms at the setting of the watch. Secondly, you shall take special care that God be not blasphemed in your ship,' and so on.

The End

to the Resurrection as he was drawing near the Valley of the Shadow through which all have to pass?

It may have been reaction and relief after the prolonged tension of hoping against hope which gave Raleigh courage to assume the gay air of gallantry with which he met his end and won the admiration of all times. As he came from Westminster Hall to the Gatehouse, sentenced to die on the morrow, he met an old acquaintance with a cheerful greeting, and 'You will come to-morrow morning,' as if inviting him to the drama in which he was to play the title rôle. 'I do not know what you may do for a place. For my part I am sure of one. You must seek what shrift you can.'

His kinsman, Thomas Flynn, who visited him at the Gatehouse, rebuked him for being too merry. 'It is my last mirth in this world,' he replied, 'do not grudge it to me. When I come to the sad parting you will see me grave enough,' was his answer. The Dean of Westminster, Tounson, came to offer him spiritual consolation, and was struck too by his demeanour of cheeriness so near death. 'He seemed to make so light of it that I wondered at him. But he gave God thanks that he never feared death. He was the most fearless of death that ever was known, and the most resolute and confident, yet with reverence and conscience.'

Deeply pathetic must have been the 'sad parting' that night from the beloved one to whom through all vicissitudes he had been a true and tender husband. Lady Raleigh, broken-hearted, came at dusk to take farewell of him, and they conversed together for

Sir Walter Raleigh

several hours. She had up till the last prostrated herself in prayers that he might be saved, and her boy had appealed with passionate vehemence to the King for his father's life. No wonder that afterward, when the Earl of Pembroke brought young Carew Raleigh to court, James 'liked not his countenance' and said he appeared to him like the ghost of his father. Of the boy, his poor parents at their anguished parting had not courage to speak. They confined themselves to talking of Raleigh's future vindication in case he should not be allowed to defend himself at the block. In a burst of grief Lady Raleigh told her husband of the one miserable concession that all her petitions had succeeded in wringing from the Lords of the Council. They would not grant her his life, but had permitted her the right of claiming his body after death. And as the hour of midnight boomed from the clock of the abbey, and she had to wrench herself from his arms, he said gently:

'It is well, dear Bess, that thou mayest dispose of that dead which thou hadst not always the disposing of when alive.'

After she was gone he spent the hours that remained in reading, writing and musing. Dean Tounson, who attended him to the end, wrote to a friend: 'He was very cheerful that morning he died; eate his breakfast heartily and took tobacco; and made no more of his death than it had been to take a journey; and left a great impression on the minds of those that beheld him . . .' On his leaving the Gatehouse some one handed him a cup of wine, and when asked if it was to his liking, he said, 'I will

The End

answer you as did the fellow who drank at St Giles's bowl as he went to Tyburn, "It is a good drink if a man might but tarry by it."

He received the Holy Communion early, and was led forth to the block in Palace Yard, wearing a black velvet night-gown over a hair-coloured waistcoat, black cut taffetas breeches, and ash-coloured stockings. Under his hat he wore a 'wrought lace night-cap,' which he threw to a bald-headed old man in the crowd, saying that his need of it was greater than his own. He was surrounded by sixty guards. The morning was cold and frosty, and some workmen, who had made furnaces beneath the scaffold, asked him to come down and warm himself by them.

There was no reason to have feared that the right of free speech would be refused him. He spoke for three-quarters of an hour, people of all sorts and degrees hanging on his lips. In spite of its being Lord Mayor's Day, the crowd was enormous. His stately bearing and simple dignity profoundly moved the spectators.

'I thank God that he has sent me to die in the light and not in the darkness' was his first exclamation, for he had greatly feared that he would be put an end to secretly and so prevented from uttering his vindication in public. Then he apologized for the weakness of his voice owing to his ague, and was afraid he would not be heard by the members of the Council who sat in the window near; and the Earls of Arundel, Oxford and Northampton answered that they would come down to him, and accordingly did so, and stood by him while he spoke. With

Sir Walter Raleigh

splendid soul-stirring eloquence and great solemnity he once more related his story, replying one by one to the charges brought against him. He called God to witness that he was a true Englishman, who had not held treaty with the French, that he had not rejoiced ungenerously over the death of Essex and smoked a pipe of tobacco during his execution, that his conduct with regard to the last exploration of Guiana had been straightforward and sincere. Indignantly he exposed the lies of Stukeley (whom nevertheless he forgave) and of the quack Manourie. He craved God's pardon for his sins, saying:

'I have grievously offended, being a man full of all vanity who has lived a sinful life in such callings as are most conducive to it. For I have been a soldier, sailor and courtier which are courses of wickedness and vice.' Then he put off his long velvet gown and satin doublet and made ready, calmly and cheerfully for the end. 'I have a long journey to go,' he said, 'therefore I must take leave.' The executioner, kneeling, begged his forgiveness, and he freely granted it, laying his hands on the man's shoulders. Next he asked him to show him the axe. 'Prythee let me see it. Dost thou think I am afraid of it?' And after testing the blade with his fingers, he said to the sheriff, 'This is a sharp and fair medicine, but a sound cure for all diseases.' To the question which way he would lie upon the block, he replied, 'So the heart be right, it little matters which way the head lies.'

When the headsman should have dealt the fatal stroke, he hesitated, though Raleigh had twice given the signal. Then for the last time the soft per-

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suasive voice was heard admonishing, 'What dost thou fear? Strike, man! strike!'

And the blow fell which severed the grand grey head of Walter Raleigh from his wracked and ague-stricken body, to the eternal shame of the monarch. A groan of indignation and disgust rose from the crowd as the head was thrust into a red bag, a groan that was echoed as the news spread throughout the land. The fearlessness and nobility of his death bestowed on Raleigh that never-ending popularity among his countrymen which in the pride and insolence of his prosperous days he had never been able to attain. Englishmen execrated more than ever the proposed Spanish alliance, and James himself soon began to see the futility of having put to death 'a man who was able to have done him service, as useful a man as served any prince in Christendom.' Such was the belated praise which he gave Raleigh in his reproaches to Spain when it was plain to all the world that Spain had outwitted him and had lowered the prestige of England.

The day after her husband's execution Lady Raleigh wrote a pathetic note to her brother, asking him to be allowed 'to berri the worthy boddi of my nobell hosban, Sur Walter Raleigh in your Chorche at Beddington. . . . God hold me in my wits.' Why, after this request, the body was buried in the chancel of St Margaret's, Westminster, no one knows. His faithful widow preserved and cherished the head all the years that she survived him, and then bequeathed it to their son Carew, in whose grave it was buried. In the next reign this son vainly petitioned Charles I for the restoration of the Sherborne

Sir Walter Raleigh

estates, and, referring to his father's execution, said that 'Justice was indeed blind . . . condemning for things contradictory, for Sir Walter Raleigh was condemned for being a friend to the Spaniards and lost his life for being their utter enemy.'

Borrowing the phrase 'things contradictory' from Raleigh's son, we may apply it, in a different sense from which he used it, to his father's character. The polished courtier, seaman, soldier, poet and Virginian planter was a nature compounded indeed of many varying elements. We have seen, in following his history, how capable he was of the highest and noblest actions, and how often he descended to the lowest and most ignoble. He was not born too soon or too late. As Mr Hume says, Raleigh was 'a child of his age,' the spacious age of Elizabeth, when England was a 'nest of singing birds' teeming with the spirit of the Renaissance and craving for adventure and gold. Raleigh's faults were the faults of his time, yet, even allowing this, it is difficult to reconcile the man of high principle with the man who repudiated the rumour of his marriage to the charming maid-of-honour when she was already his wife, or the brave man who scorned danger and death, with the grovelling pleader for mercy at the hands of a boorish King. Hard, too, is it to understand how the high-minded head of the Sherborne household, the tender and affectionate husband and kindly father, could pen anything so cold and selfish and full of worldly cynicism as 'Instructions to his Son and Posterity,' which rival Lord Chesterfield's of a later date. Harder of all to believe that the author of the *Soul's Errand*, palpitat-

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ing as it does with lofty sentiment and scorn of evil-doers in high places, could flatter so shamelessly and pander so grossly to the absurd vanity of his Queen.

Yet when all is said and done, let us never forget that Raleigh's ambition was not all for self, but for the nation's good. He was not only the reckless gambler, but the patriot and idealist, the first to dream of planting that vast empire beyond the seas which to-day is Britain's chief boast and glory. For the sake of this ideal he became the 'scourge of Spain,' for this he lived and died, and as Raleigh's eventful career, with its dazzling opening and its tragic end, passes again in review before our eyes, like pictures from the romance of some knight-errant, we think of the words Shakespeare said of another; he

Had the elements
So mixed in him that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world, 'This was a man.'

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